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ABSTRACT

Whether school district support and training in standards-based assessment, grading, and reporting in classrooms can change teacher practice in these areas was studied in a Florida school district. This district, Bay District Schools of Panama City, has been working with the SERVE Regional Educational Laboratory on a project that involves teachers making changes in the classroom that support standards-based assessment, grading practices, and reporting procedures. The relationship between professional development for these purposes and actual changes was studied using a variety of data sources, both quantitative and qualitative. In all, 241 educators participated over the 3-year period of the evaluation. The collected evidence indicates that teachers are making efforts to implement changes in their classrooms with support from the school district and its professional development activities. The level of this change, however, has not met current school district expectations. Because additional work, and possibly alternative strategies, may be needed, the paper makes recommendations for improved professional development. An appendix contains documents used in the studies, including data collection instruments, school district documents, and professional development resources. (Contains 11 tables, 4 figures, and 14 references.) (SLD)

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Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the
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Chicago, IL
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Standards-Based Grading and Reporting in Classrooms:
Can District Training and Support Change Teacher Practice?

By
Nancy McMunn
Patricia Schenck
Wendy McColskey

Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association
Chicago, IL
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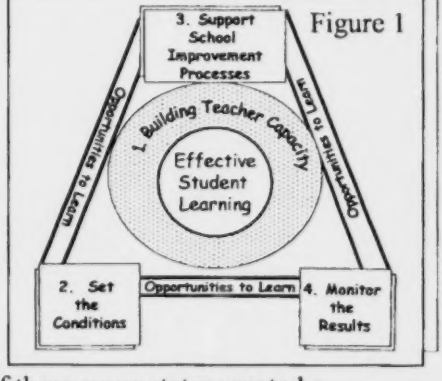
Purpose

"*...problems all require people in the organization not just to do their work differently, but to think differently about the nature and purposes of their work*"...(Elmore 2002).

Richard Elmore's quote supports the purposes for the work summarized in this paper. Educators in schools, districts, and classrooms must 1) learn how to think differently about the nature and purpose of their work and 2) know how to be good consumers of the research and data that supports this thinking. The beginning of this paper outlines a district's logic model of thinking. The district thinking includes the resources and systemic support already addressed. The model outlines further assumptions, strategies, and factors to consider that will ultimately help teachers create classroom assessments, grading practices, and reporting procedures that exemplify student achievement of standards. Extracted from this logic model is the primary purpose for this paper which is to describe the "quality professional development and support, " in other words training and support that is supplied by the district to help teachers work to change practices around classroom assessments, grading practices, and reporting procedures that reflect a standards-based system. The paper presented here also makes recommendations to the district on their efforts. The contents of the paper discuss the assumptions, inputs, intervention, outcomes, and impacts of the thinking process that were part of the professional development planning and implementation. The district model, includes basic components that will lead to building teacher capacity as outlined in Figure 1(e.g., professional development, instructional leadership); setting the conditions in the district for continuous improvement (e.g., defining standards, strategic planning); supporting effective school improvement processes (e.g., informal school reviews, allocation of funds); and monitoring progress (e.g., use of data on implementation of practices, recommendations for change).

Figure 1



Framework for Change

In the last decade, many states implemented content standards that define student-learning goals for schools and districts. Many of these same states created a testing and accountability program that assesses student achievement on standards. These reform efforts not only raise expectations for student achievement but also for teachers. Without significant, coordinated efforts to build district, school, and teacher capacities to organize teaching and learning around these standards; and build cultures that use classroom assessment to improve learning, the testing and accountability initiatives will not be able to achieve the goal of improved student outcomes for all students. Implications of state systemic reform for districts are to ensure that school faculties understand how to continuously improve instructional programs, align them with standards, and know how to assess student progress towards achievement of those standards.

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What is a standards-based system? According to Tucker and Codding (1998) "at the most general level, standards based education refers to the search for ways of thinking about and operating schools and school systems that ensure that all students achieve defined and challenging standards of performance." For many districts this means that teachers should design and implement learning opportunities for students that reflect key instructional goals (standards) with classroom assessment and grading practices that provide students with feedback on their progress and achievement. Standards-based instruction and assessment represents a significant shift in thinking and practice for many teachers. This section is organized into three main sections each with a guiding question for discussion. The following questions will be addressed.

1. Why change classroom-grading practices?
2. Why change district-reporting procedures?
3. What has this district done?

Creating a professional culture where teachers are viewed as reflective learners is difficult for many districts and schools "There has been a strong tendency in recent federal and state policy initiatives to by-pass or ignore the districts role in the change process.... In many ways, districts are the major source of capacity-building for schools, structuring, providing or controlling access to professional development, curriculum, and new instructional ideas, more and qualified staff, relationships with external agents, and so on." (pg. 17, Goertz and Massell, 1999)

Key to creating a culture of reflective learners is the type of professional development provided in schools and districts. Richard Elmore (2002) suggests that professional development requires:

- commitment to consistency and focus over a long term where the training can shape learning,
- a good design in order to develop capacity of teachers to work collectively,
- embodiment of a clear model of adult learning,
- an on-site emphasis
- a focus on student learning,
- a research basis and exemplary practice,
- the training to be embedded in classroom learning and curriculum,
- involvement of school leaders and staff, and
- monitoring and a method to provide feedback on the practice.

There are also substantial problems with the current practice on the use of assessment in classrooms (Crooks, 1988; Black and Wiliam, 1998; Shepard, 2000). *"Broadly defined, classroom assessment is an ongoing process through which teachers and students interact to promote greater learning. The assessment process involves using a range of strategies to make decisions regarding instruction and gathering information about student performance or behavior in order to diagnose students' problems, monitor their progress, and give feedback for improvement" (McMunn 2000, p.6).* Black and Wiliam summarize some of the problems with classroom assessment as:

1) Classroom assessment practices generally focus more on superficial or rote learning, concentrating on recall of isolated details, which students soon forget.
2) Teachers do not review their assessments/assignments or get peers to review them so there is little critical reflection on what is being assessed and why.

3) The grading aspect of assessment is overemphasized and the learning or improvement purpose of assessment is underemphasized.

Black and Wiliam also say that if the goal is to raise standards of student achievement then it is within reach for all teachers if the use of formative assessment is improved. However, improving on formative assessment is a slow process and can only be done through sustained professional development and support, and the type of professional development outlined by Elmore and others. Thus, encouraging teachers to work on formative assessment to help implement a standards based system seems a likely target for districts to consider in any professional development initiative.

1. WHY CHANGE CLASSROOM GRADING PRACTICES?

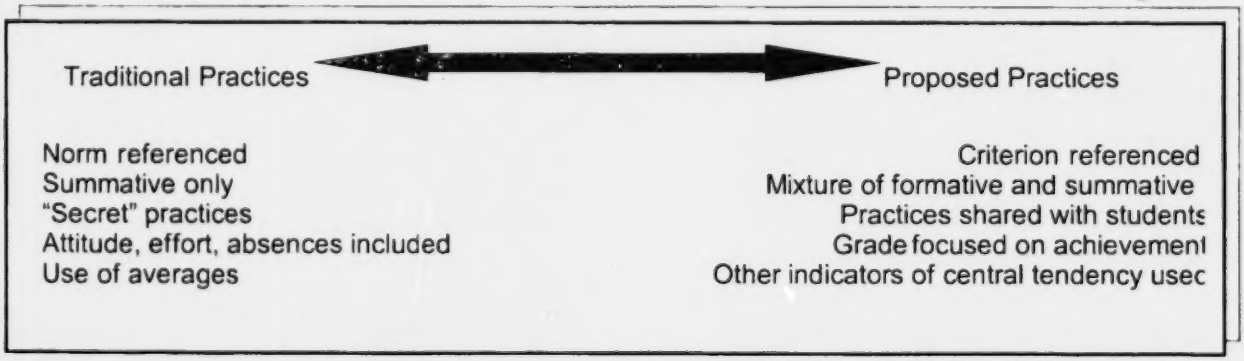
The process of changing how grades are determined and reported to reflect student achievement of standards is a very difficult process. When teachers use formative and summative assessment strategies to help students learn the standards, then often traditional grading and reporting practices do not support these classroom assessment processes. Marzano (2000) states there are three problem areas around classroom grading practices "(1) teachers consider many factors other than academic achievement when they assign grades, (2) teachers weight assessments differently, and (3) teachers misinterpret single scores on classroom assessments." If the primary purpose of grades is to communicate information about student learning, then in a standards based system, grades should reflect learning standards and not other variables.

Guskey and Bailey (2001, page 3) report some guiding premises in developing grading and reporting systems for learning. Districts and schools wanting to change their grading practices and develop professional development to support any changes should pay attention to the following:

1. *The primary goal of grading and reporting is communication.*
2. *Grading and reporting are integral parts of the instructional process.*
3. *Good reporting is based on good evidence.*
4. *Changes in grading and reporting are best accomplished through the development of a comprehensive reporting system.*

For grading and reporting systems to mimic these premises many districts, schools, and classroom teachers must understand the systemic changes needed at the district, school, and classroom levels. The following Figure (Figure 2) outlines proposed practices that best support a Standards based system as defined by Tucker and Codding.

Figure 2



Previous research has shown that grading and reporting should relate to specific criteria. Wiggins (1998, p. 12) recommends that grades be "linked directly to credible and important state or national standards for assessing performance on authentic tasks." In this manner, grades can "provide accurate, quality information about what students have learned, what they can do, and whether their learning status is in line with expectations for that level" (Guskey, 1996, p. 20). The grading procedures being recommended here emphasize criterion-referenced systems (measurement against a standard), rather than traditional norm-referenced ones (grading on a curve, rating one student's performance against another's). The standards to be met are communicated to the student prior to instruction, instruction is designed to aid students in achieving the standard, and assessments are created to measure student achievement versus the standard.

Changing grading practices mean changing the way teachers determine and record grades in grade books. Many teachers are locked into traditional grading systems that mimic the format of the report card used in a school or district. However, although teachers generally have control over the classroom assessments or grading practices they use, they may not have control over the way this information is reported to stakeholders. These reporting procedures are generally controlled at the district level. Therefore, it is vital that reform efforts not only address changes to classroom grading practices but also involve changes to district reporting procedures. Thus, getting teachers to think about what is best for student learning is key. Quality classroom assessments and good grading practices can lead to better reporting, especially if all are aligned to the standards that students are suppose to know and be able to do. However, when districts need to revise report cards – teachers working with this change need to have a strong background and understand sound classroom assessment and grading practices. Districts should provide quality professional development for teachers that will impact the desired understanding and change needed.

2. WHY CHANGE DISTRICT REPORTING PROCEDURES?

Once assessment and grading practices are employed by teachers to reflect student learning of standards, then the reporting process is key to making the communication of student achievement to standards clear, precise, and meaningful. Once again, coordinated reform efforts that address both classroom grading practices and district reporting procedures are vital for systemic change. Gains made at one level may not have the systemic support to be institutionalized and maintained. For example, districts that have not made necessary changes to align district reporting procedures with standards may force individual teachers to continue long-standing classroom assessment and grading practices that are aligned with current traditional reporting procedures rather than state standards. In this case, individual development of teachers is curtailed by a lack of organizational development.

Similar troubles surface if organizational development (changes in district reporting procedures) is not accompanied by efforts to change individual teacher performance (changes in classroom assessment and grading practices). In these situations, individual teachers are not provided with the necessary knowledge or skills to function within the "new" system. They are, in effect, left out of the reform process. When teachers are left out of the loop, they feel frustrated because they do not understand the purpose of the reform and frequently respond in ways that subvert the reform's success. Resistance to these reform efforts also frequently surfaces from parents and

other community stakeholders. Newspapers across the nation document public outcry and concern in the face of changes in district reporting policies. Clearly, inept public relations tactics and poorly planned community education efforts have contributed to this discontent. All of these concerns stem from a lack of planning and coordination at the organizational level.

Sparks and Hirsh discuss development at the individual and organizational levels.

> "Too often we have expected dramatic changes in schools based solely on staff development programs intended to help individual teachers and administrators do their jobs more effectively. An important lesson from the past few years, however, has been that improvements in individual performance alone are insufficient to produce the results we desire. It is now clear that success depends upon both the learning of individual school employees and improvements in the capacities of the organization to solve problems and renew itself. As systems thinking has taught us, unless individual learning and organizational changes are addressed simultaneously and support one another, the gains made in one area may be cancelled by continuing problems in the other." (Sparks and Hirsh, 1997, page 12)

Clearly, this type of standards-based reform is both challenging and complex. Districts, however, are pressured to address these challenges from multiple sources. Pressure for these reforms is present from within the system as well as from outside sources. Spurred by calls for increased accountability in schools and teachers' desires to better reflect what's going on in classrooms, many districts throughout the country are adopting reform efforts that will lead to new ways to measure and report student achievement. State agencies, in many cases, are also applying pressure for reform of traditional reporting procedures. Many states are pushing districts to ensure that classroom assessment, grading, and reporting are aligned with state standards. The motive for such involvement at the state level is perhaps the concern that reporting by individual teachers can be inconsistent across districts, schools, and classrooms. For example, districts in Florida must develop report cards that address:

- Reporting student achievement in relation to standards,
- Reporting academic achievement grades separately from other matters (improvement, conduct, attitude, etc.),
- Aligning local and state reporting, and
- Aligning classroom instruction to state standards therefore providing instructional validity

These multiple sources of pressure are causing districts to reflect upon individual teacher practices and organizational traditions that have not been questioned or challenged in the past. What is needed is a coherent strategic plan for reform that supports individual teacher growth through responsive and collaborative structures and coordinates organization development in ways that ensure the success of the reform.

Another compelling reason exists for making changes to district reporting procedures. District reports serve as a consistent form of internal accountability. Many experts in the field of assessment have identified changes to district reporting systems as the "ultimate accountability measure" for a district system. In other words, changing district reports that alignment with state

standards provides undeniable pressure on individuals within the system. If district reports require data regarding specific attainment of state standards, then teachers must have assessment evidence to report within that format. As a result, teachers can no longer "close their classroom door" and ignore standards-based reform. Classroom instruction, assessment, and grading procedures must be aligned with state standards in order to comply with required district reporting procedures.

3. WHAT HAS THIS DISTRICT DONE?

The purpose of this paper is to share the procedural knowledge from one Florida School District, Bay District Schools in Panama City. This medium-sized district serves a mixed rural and urban area with 27 elementary schools, 6 middle schools and 4 major high schools. Approximately 1,700 teachers serve the needs of a diverse student population.

Over the past three years Bay District has been and continues to work with the SERVE Regional Educational Laboratory on a project that involves teachers making changes in the classroom that support standards-based classroom assessment, grading practices, and reporting procedures. The professional development structures are key to this district's systemic initiative.

The district initiated work in 1995 in response to the publication of the Florida Sunshine State Standards. Their initial work focused on building teacher capacity to understand and use classroom assessments that were aligned with the new Sunshine State Standards. This report focuses on the second aspect of the district initiative that explores how to help teachers build individual capacity for standards-based classroom grading, and reporting practices and how this work continues to support teacher growth in identified areas of classroom assessment.

The Logic Map (Figure 3 on page10) shows the major issues the district has been addressing over the past three years. The assumptions outlined on the logic map were drawn from data collected from teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders. The major problem/issue identified on the logic map is how the district should provide resources and support for standards-based assessment, grading, and reporting practices. Quality professional development was identified as the major area of focus to address and study over time that would lead to building greater capacity to sustain the district work.

There are several assumptions that helped us form the ideas around building quality professional development training. For example, this district researched, developed, and field-tested a set of Classroom Assessment Guidelines (CAG) that define standards-based classroom practices. These guidelines are supported by current research in the area of assessment and define common expectations for all classroom teachers. The development of these guidelines began with the identification of six guiding principles that define what we believe about classroom assessment listed below

1. The primary purpose of assessment is to improve learning for all students.
2. Assessment is aligned to standards.
3. Assessment is a process that is reflective of quality.
4. Grading is fair, consistent, and meaningful.

5. Communication among stakeholders is timely, appropriate to audience, and aligned to standards.
6. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, communicated, and understood by all stakeholders. (See full document in Appendix B)

In relation to the logic map, the development of the CAG document is seen as a significant "input" into the district process of reform. The district involved experienced external consultants as well as district staff from all levels to coordinate the production of this document. The multi-level approach for involvement in the production of the document was identified as a major factor contributing to the ultimate success for creating a vision of quality for the classroom. Volunteer schools and teachers provided internal support and feedback on 'how to' improve the document as they worked to show how they were implementing various principles within their own classrooms. Revisions were completed prior to the document's presentation to the school board and other major stakeholders. The external experts also provided an additional level of support. They were able to help the district formulate and produce 'quality' professional development activities around the CAG document. A toolkit, entitled, "Examining Grading and Reporting Practices" was developed as a resource for the district training. Data was collected and analyzed around field-test training sessions over a three year period.

These inputs are seen as key components leading to projected outcomes and impacts on the district system as a whole. Ultimately, Bay District Schools desires to create a professional development model that can be used to build teacher capacity, promote reflective learning, and support standards-based practices within the system. A systemic professional development process is desired that:

- is on-going in nature,
- focuses on changes in on-the-job behaviors,
- addresses organizational development as well as individual teacher development,
- is customized to address system and teacher needs, and
- focuses on student learning outcomes.

In order to understand the current reform efforts, it is necessary to provide a brief description of previous professional development and reform efforts. Bay District in Panama City, Florida began collaborating with SERVE in 1996 on a district wide initiative to train all 1,700 Bay District teachers and administrators in quality assessment. Unique aspects of this training were that, after the first two days of assessment training, teachers were required to develop and use a performance assessment with their students, which was then critiqued at a two-day follow-up session. During this same time period, the district mandated training of all teachers and administrators in curriculum alignment. This training developed by the state of Florida provided support for the rollout of the newly developed Sunshine State Standards.

This mandatory professional development on curriculum alignment and classroom assessment was one of the largest training initiatives in this district and it provided a common message and language about how teachers should react to state standards. Survey data from over 1,024 teachers showed that, after the assessment training, 80% reported needing additional assistance in the area of assessment. The responses most frequently reported were related to time for

planning and practice to develop and use more quality assessments. Teachers also responded that they needed more help with the understanding, development, and use of rubrics.

In summary, the four-day training program seemed to have created an "awareness" among teachers about some of the issues in using classroom assessment well. The district has continued to require this training of all new teachers hired. However, it is not clear the extent to which "best practices" in classroom assessment have been implemented, particularly in light of the recent state push in Florida to grade schools, which seems to have resulted in teachers reverting to classroom assessment that mimics state test formats.

Ken O'Connor, a consultant contracted to assist with the district reform efforts, reflects on his experience with pressure vs. support for initiatives that lead to building capacity in assessment: "*One of the most difficult decisions that a district has to make when it decides to try to 'move' all of its educators to greater assessment literacy and more appropriate assessment, grading, and reporting practices is to determine the appropriate balance between pressure and support. To a considerable extent, this balance depends on the culture or tradition of the district with regard to change.*

A support model is preferable in terms of developing appropriate attitudes toward the change but a support model alone generally results in relatively little real change. A pressure model is preferable if rapid change is desired but such an approach may be met by resistance and subversion and the change may be more apparent than real.

Having observed a number of districts that have struggled with this dilemma, it appears that the most effective model is one that starts with support and voluntary involvement but after the change effort has 'taken root' moves to a pressure model with a clear requirement that assessment, grading, and/or reporting practices will be in line with district expectations by a stated date preferably at least a year from the date of the announcement (McMunn, McColskey, and O'Connor 2002, p. 11)."

Bay District Schools has followed this most effective model by starting small with a group of motivated and capable volunteer teachers. By using a collaborative approach based on reflection and feedback, the district has been able to refine and improve the assessment guidelines, the professional development program, and the district reporting structure. Over time, the success of the initial volunteer teachers has also led to expansion of the project. These initial efforts all focused on providing support for reform efforts. As these efforts expanded, pressure was also provided for the change, through the Classroom Assessment Guidelines becoming part of district policy and requiring that all teachers implement these guidelines within two school years.

Figures 3 and 4 on the following pages show the Logic Map for Bay District and outline the work that has been on-going since 1999.

Figure 3

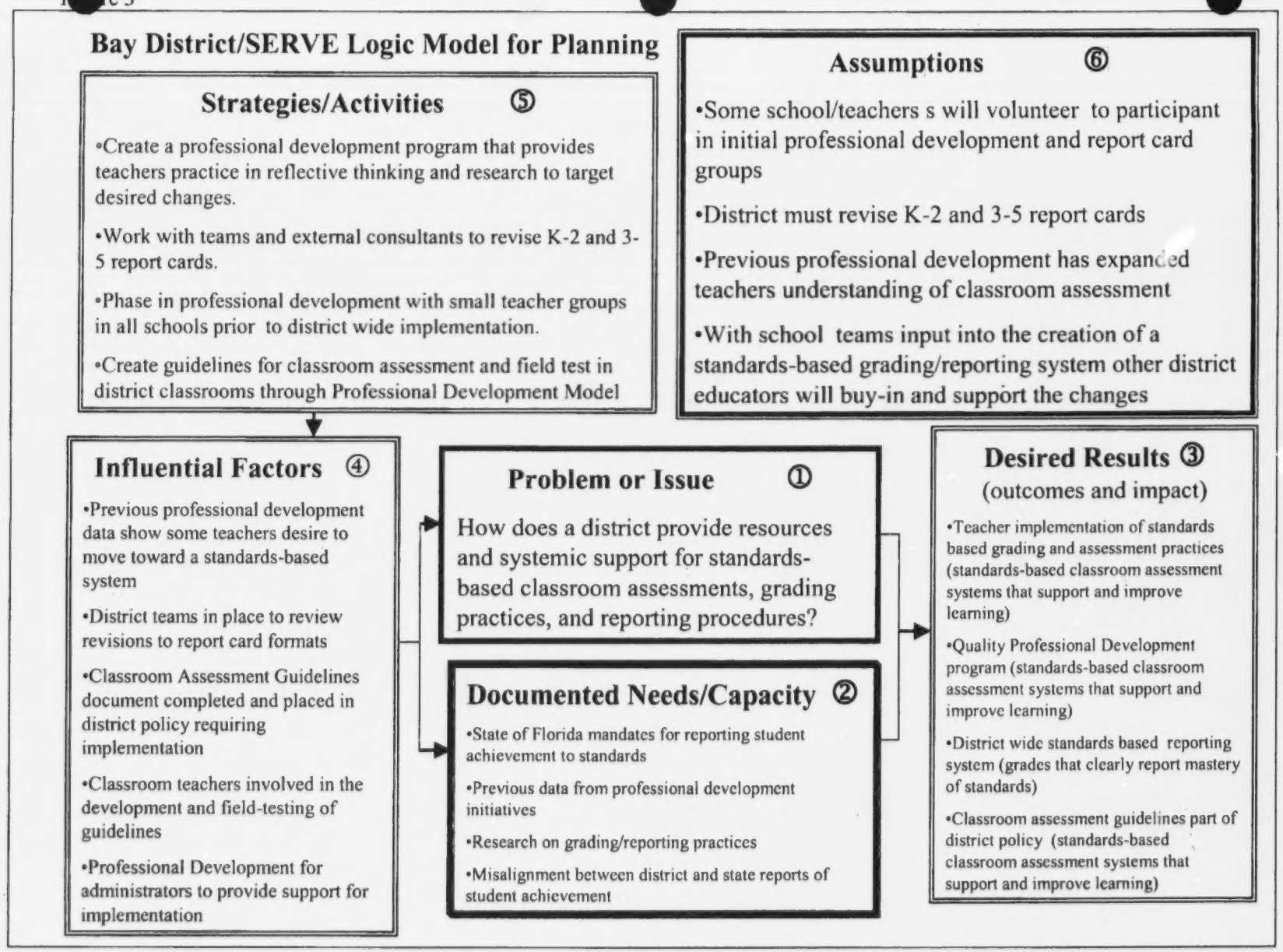

Bay District/SERVE Logic Model for Planning
Strategies/Activities ⑤
•Create a professional development program that provides teachers practice in reflective thinking and research to target desired changes.
•Work with teams and external consultants to revise K-2 and 3-5 report cards.
•Phase in professional development with small teacher groups in all schools prior to district wide implementation.
•Create guidelines for classroom assessment and field test in district classrooms through Professional Development Model
Assumptions ⑥
•Some school/teachers s will volunteer to participant in initial professional development and report card groups
•District must revise K-2 and 3-5 report cards
•Previous professional development has expanded teachers understanding of classroom assessment
•With school teams input into the creation of a standards-based grading/reporting system other district educators will buy-in and support the changes
Influential Factors ④
•Previous professional development data show some teachers desire to move toward a standards-based system
•District teams in place to review revisions to report card formats
•Classroom Assessment Guidelines document completed and placed in district policy requiring implementation
•Classroom teachers involved in the development and field-testing of guidelines
•Professional Development for administrators to provide support for implementation
Problem or Issue ①
How does a district provide resources and systemic support for standards-based classroom assessments, grading practices, and reporting procedures?
Documented Needs/Capacity ②
•State of Florida mandates for reporting student achievement to standards
•Previous data from professional development initiatives
•Research on grading/reporting practices
•Misalignment between district and state reports of student achievement
Desired Results ③
(outcomes and impact)
•Teacher implementation of standards based grading and assessment practices (standards-based classroom assessment systems that support and improve learning)
•Quality Professional Development program (standards-based classroom assessment systems that support and improve learning)
•District wide standards based reporting system (grades that clearly report mastery of standards)
•Classroom assessment guidelines part of district policy (standards-based classroom assessment systems that support and improve learning)

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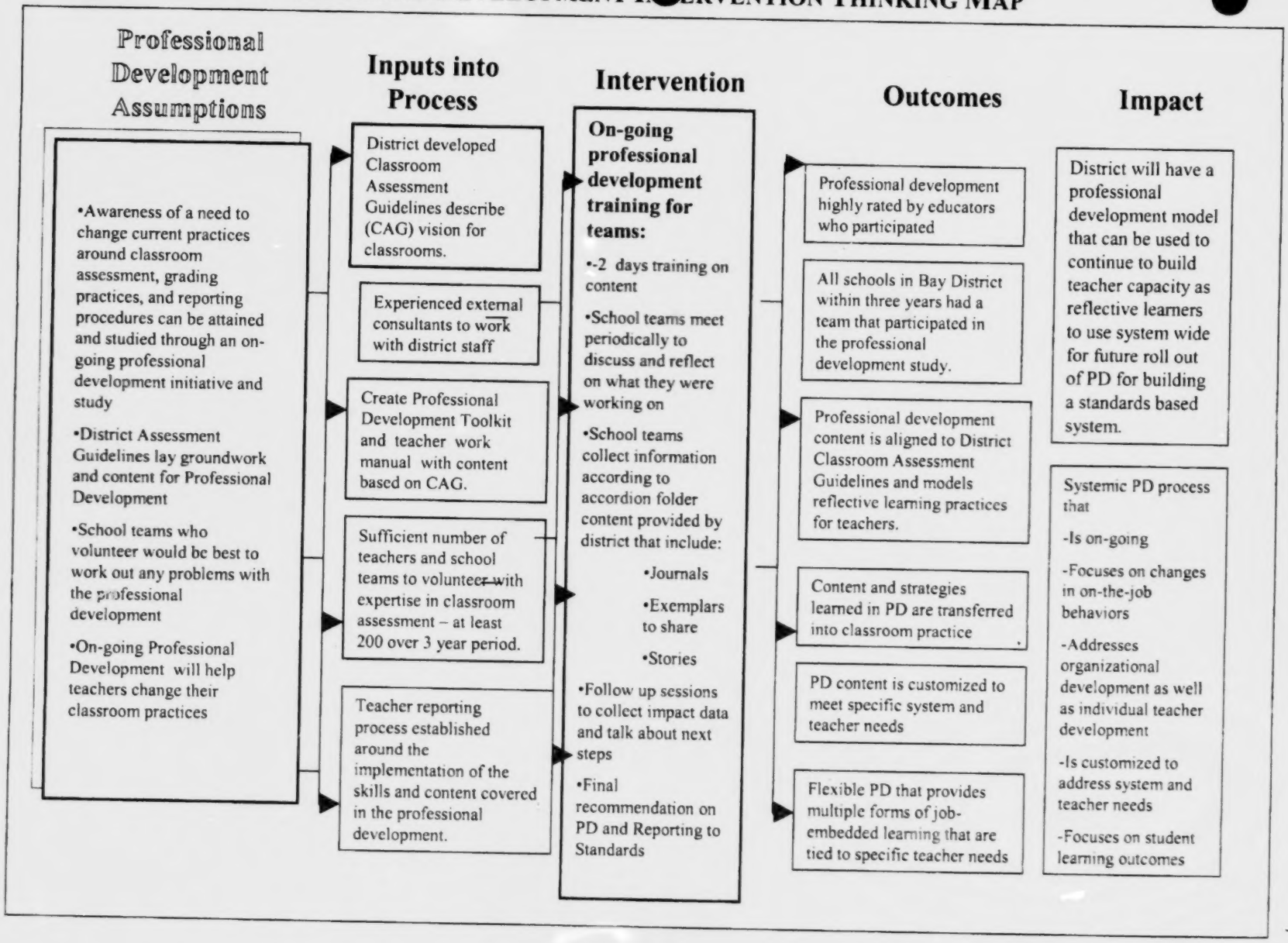
Fig. 4

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTION THINKING MAP


Professional Development Assumptions
•Awareness of a need to change current practices around classroom assessment, grading practices, and reporting procedures can be attained and studied through an on-going professional development initiative and study
•District Assessment Guidelines lay groundwork and content for Professional Development
•School teams who volunteer would be best to work out any problems with the professional development
•On-going Professional Development will help teachers change their classroom practices
Inputs into Process
District developed Classroom Assessment Guidelines describe (CAG) vision for classrooms.
Experienced external consultants to work with district staff
Create Professional Development Toolkit and teacher work manual with content based on CAG.
Sufficient number of teachers and school teams to volunteer with expertise in classroom assessment – at least 200 over 3 year period.
Teacher reporting process established around the implementation of the skills and content covered in the professional development.
Intervention
On-going professional development training for teams:
•-2 days training on content
•School teams meet periodically to discuss and reflect on what they were working on
•School teams collect information according to accordion folder content provided by district that include:
•Journals
•Exemplars to share
•Stories
•Follow up sessions to collect impact data and talk about next steps
•Final recommendation on PD and Reporting to Standards
Outcomes
Professional development highly rated by educators who participated
All schools in Bay District within three years had a team that participated in the professional development study.
Professional development content is aligned to District Classroom Assessment Guidelines and models reflective learning practices for teachers.
Content and strategies learned in PD are transferred into classroom practice
PD content is customized to meet specific system and teacher needs
Flexible PD that provides multiple forms of job-embedded learning that are tied to specific teacher needs
Impact
District will have a professional development model that can be used to continue to build teacher capacity as reflective learners to use system wide for future roll out of PD for building a standards based system.
Systemic PD process that
-Is on-going
-Focuses on changes in on-the-job behaviors
-Addresses organizational development as well as individual teacher development
-Is customized to address system and teacher needs
-Focuses on student learning outcomes

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Description of Intervention and Methods Used

As mentioned above, for standards-based reform to work, the important content standards need to be the focus of classroom assessment, grading strategies, and reporting procedures. But in this Florida District, as in most districts, classroom assessment is not typically standards-based. In other words, if you look at grade books, typically they are organized with student names listed vertically and assessment methods listed horizontally across the top. The assessments are often described by words, like "chapter 1 test", "chapter 1 quiz", "homework, and page 58", etc., not by what the assignment assessed (the standard or target). Although most teachers have made efforts to align their instructional practices and activities with standards, many have not addressed the more complex issues involved with determining how mastery of standards should be assessed. Recognizing from prior research and experiences of other districts that tackling these complex issues would be a huge undertaking, the district decided to move slowly. It was decided to organize the effort around a volunteer group of teachers (about 241 out of 1700) who would build their knowledge in grading and reporting and try to apply their new thinking to their classroom assessment process and show how those changes were embedded in their grading and reporting strategies.

Exploring Changes Needed in Grading and Reporting

The District Assessment Guidelines document provided a structure for the district team, working with outside consultants, to develop a four-day professional development training session for participants around the six guiding principles of the Classroom Assessment Guidelines. The professional development is entitled, *"Examining Grading and Reporting Practices."* Based on data analysis of earlier classroom assessment training, it was determined that more assessment training was needed for teachers that focused on formative and summative uses of assessment, rubric development, large-scale assessment, and grading practices. However, the major focus of the training was on the grading and reporting changes necessary to move toward reporting to standards. As this classroom level, work evolved with the training, the district also supported other changes including revisions to the district report card system that would coordinate with the associated changes in classroom assessment and grading practices.

The volunteer teachers participating in this training session agreed to:

- Form a school leadership team to work with the district team over time
- Complete and share pre/post data on grading and reporting
- Share evidence of classroom changes around grading and reporting practices and keep a school journal on changes noted
- Participate in all 4 days of the *Examining Grading and Reporting Practices* Training
- Field test the assessment guidelines in their classrooms
- Make some school wide or classroom level change (during the first year and sustain this over time) in grading practices based on the training session information and/or other research
- Accept classroom visits from the District Grading and Reporting Study Group
- Attend all Evaluation Sessions for up to three years to share, provide evidence, and
- receive feedback and support on changes made in grading practices

- Provide feedback to the district regarding the content of the Classroom Assessment Guidelines, the professional development workshop, and district reporting formats

It was hoped that this job-embedded, extended training and the feedback structure for improvement would offer a way to study teacher change over time, provide an avenue for teachers to share with the district any advice on the training (see timeline for district work in Appendix C). The structure also provided an avenue for teacher recommendations on the Classroom Assessment Guidelines, grading strategies, and report card changes, and provided a way to begin to build capacity in the whole-district through teacher buy in to the inevitable changes in district grading and reporting policy.

Data Sources and Results

A variety of data sources were used in trying to understand the impact and reactions on the participating teachers to the professional development and implementation at the classroom level of how to change grading and reporting practices. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. In this section, we summarize data from prior knowledge surveys, end-of-training evaluation forms, pre and post self-ratings, and reflective journals.

Throughout the three-year period, multiple methods of collecting data from teachers and teams were used. As shown in Table 1 many of these data sources were self-reported and qualitative. It was important for us to talk with teachers, make observations, and look at the evidences they provided in order to determine how deep the professional development content was embedded at the classroom level. Throughout the three-year period various external and internal evaluators were asked to conduct the teacher interviews and focus groups with students and parents.

TABLE 1 - DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS TABLE

PARTICIPANTS OR LEVEL	SCHOOL WALK THROUGH DATA	TEACHER JOURNALS & GRADE BOOKS	TEACHER OBSERVATIONS & INTERVIEWS	SURVEYS (PRE & POST)	TEACHER FOCUS GROUPS	STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS	TEAM SESSION DATA	WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS
Classroom/Teacher	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
School Team	✓	✓	✓				✓	

The data and responses were organized and reported here around five key questions:

1. Who participated in the professional development study?
2. What were their beliefs and practices prior to participating in the professional development?
3. How did participants respond to the training?
4. What changes did teachers report making in their classrooms because of the professional development?
5. What were the actual changes teachers made, the impacts noted, and any unexpected outcomes from the change that was made because of the professional development/study?

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1) **Who participated in the study?**

TABLE 2 - GRADING RESEARCH TEAM PARTICIPANTS				
Schools Sites	Number for 1999	Number for 2000	Number for 2001	3 year total
Elementary Schools	12	17	56	85
Middle Schools	14	14	15	43
High Schools	18	79	11	108
Adult Education	0	0	5	5
Total	44	110	87	241

Bay District did not want to mandate that teachers or schools participate in this study and so asked for volunteers. As can be seen from Table 2, 241 educators participated over the three-year period. In the first year, the participants were fairly evenly split across levels of schools. The district requested volunteers from fewer schools during this period so the professional development training could be tested and revised based on a smaller group. In the second year, there were a significant number of high school teachers. Arnold High School asked that all their teachers be allowed to participant in this study beginning in Year 2. By the end of year three 241 teachers had participated in the study. By the end of the school year in 2002, 37 out of 40 schools had participated. Team representation was from 20 elementary schools; all 7 middle schools, 6 high schools, and 2 adult education centers. For this study, we are reporting on the period of 1999-2001.

2) **What were their beliefs and practices prior to participating in the professional development?**

Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire about their grading practices at the beginning of the training as a pre-assessment of misconceptions about classroom grading practices. Results were shared with the participants and they were given time to discuss the key findings. Responses to the questionnaire indicated that the following conditions existed to varying degrees.

- A lack of consistent guidelines for classroom grading practices. Few teachers gave students information on how their grades would be determined and what information would feed into their final grade for a quarter, etc.
- Idiosyncratic grading practices among teachers existed. Most teachers in the same school or teaching the same content area did not have guidelines for what constituted a grade. For example, one physical education teacher calculated (85% of a student grade) student grades based on whether the student dressed appropriately for activities, not on the standards or other targets the student learned.
- Grading systems were based on assessment methods and behavior rather than standards. All teachers had grade books set up in the traditional format around assignments or tests.
- Teachers felt the student focus was on grades rather than learning. Teachers felt they needed to grade everything because students expected it. Most counted zero grades for work not completed – all grades were averaged into the final grades. Most teachers could not tell what a grade meant in terms of student achievement to standards – grades were given for effort, work completed, etc., not for learning.
- Most teachers expressed a lack of understanding of formative assessment and feedback. Many teachers reported counting all work equally, even when a student was learning a

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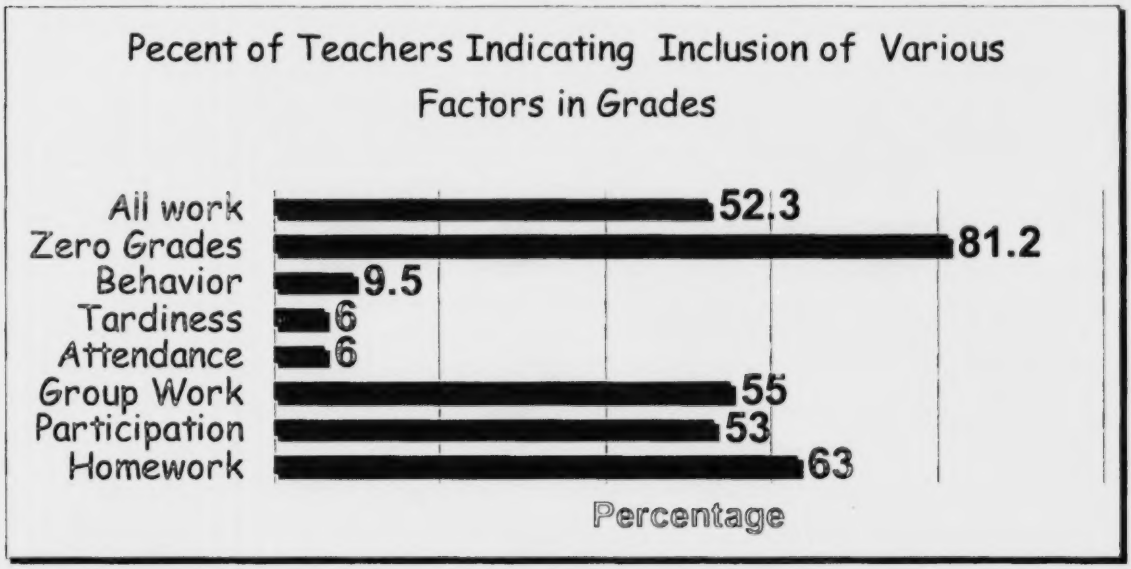
new concept. For example, scores were given on practice and homework problems in math where students were still learning the concept or the most recent information on student learning was not considered as a way to determine the student grade for a quarter.

- Simplistic views regarding motivation existed among teachers. Teachers did not seem to understand that if a student fails early in the school year or receives a low score on a report card that bringing that score up may be an impossible task for a student -- thus grading practices might have lowered the desire to learn.
- There existed a lack of concern about classroom grading procedures. Most teachers believed there were school or district-wide grading policies that guided the way they determined grades, even though these policies did not exist. Many teachers stated they had never thought much about how a grade is calculated.
- Excessive grading workload for teachers. Many teachers felt compelled to grade all student work and record that work in their grade books. They felt students would not complete work assignments if they were not counted for a grade.

Figure 5



Responses as shown in Figure 5 above indicate teachers included many factors in their grades that may not reflect student achievement of standards. For example, many of the teachers stated they included the following in calculating student grades: homework for practice (63% of total responding), participation (53%), group work (55%), attendance (6%), tardiness (6%), and behavior (9.5%) were all included in the grades students were given. Zero scores were also included in 81.2% of all teachers' classes beginning the training. And, when asked if they included all assignments in the final grade 52.3% said they did. Current Florida law requires that districts report achievement of standards in specific ways. State law prohibits using the following categories in the grade reported; behavior, tardiness, attendance, group work, and participation.

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Table 3

WHAT TEACHERS WANTED TO CHANGE IN PRACTICE	1999	2000	2001
1. Work on better formative assessment practices	✓	✓	✓
2. Change grading practices and/or grade book format	✓	✓	✓
3. Communication to students about learning	✓	✓	✓
4. Assessing and reporting to standards	✓	None	✓
5. Using a variety and/or more creative assessments	✓	✓	✓
6. Attitude toward grading practices	None	✓	✓
7. Improve parental communication	None	✓	✓

Teachers were asked at the end of the first professional development session what changes they intended to make in their classroom as a result of the training. Table 3 above shows the list by priority that teachers identified. Teachers most often stated that increasing the amount of formative assessment used in the classroom was the change they intended to make.

3) **How did participants respond to the training?**

The training represented a significant investment of teachers' time including at least 4 days of intensive training, and four additional days of follow-up team sessions. It also represented a more in-depth level of training for teachers in the district who had previously received awareness training on standards and classroom assessment. Self-report surveys were collected at the end of each training session for the three years as well as from focus team meetings and journal evidence. District staff involved in this professional development visited the schools to offer support. External consultants also visited classrooms and set up focus groups sessions to collect evidence of implementation and impacts on teachers, students, and stakeholders.

Table 4 Grading and Reporting Training - EVALUATION 99-01

SESSION DATES	*1=poor*	*2=below avg.*	*3=avg.*	*4=above avg.*	*5=excellent*	*4 & 5*
	1%	3%	28%	32%	36%	68%
1999	0%	4%	26%	40%	30%	70%
July 00	0%	0%	13%	40%	47%	87%
Session 1	0%	0%	13%	37%	50%	87%
July 00	0%	0%	9%	9%	82%	91%
Session 2	0%	0%	9%	9%	82%	91%
	5%	3%	14%	25%	53%	78%
December-00	3%	3%	12%	29%	53%	82%
	0%	0%	0%	12%	88%	100%
July-01	0%	0%	0%	14%	86%	100%

The preceding Table 4 reports evaluation data collected at the end of training sessions held between 1999 and 2001. The third year (July 2001) shows slightly higher ratings from teachers around the training, and in fact, 100% of the teachers rated the training as above average to excellent. This could be due to significant revisions to the training content and/or delivery methods made after the first year (based on participant comments and suggestions). Ratings for above average and excellent moved from 68-70% in 1999 to 100% in 2001.

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Figure 4 reports teacher perception regarding the impact the professional development will have on both teachers and students. In 1999, 89% of the teachers felt the professional development would change or impact their teaching and the rate gradually improved each year to 96% in 2001. When asked if the professional development would positively impact student performance an increase in rating from 1999-2001 went from 87% to 92%.

Figure 4

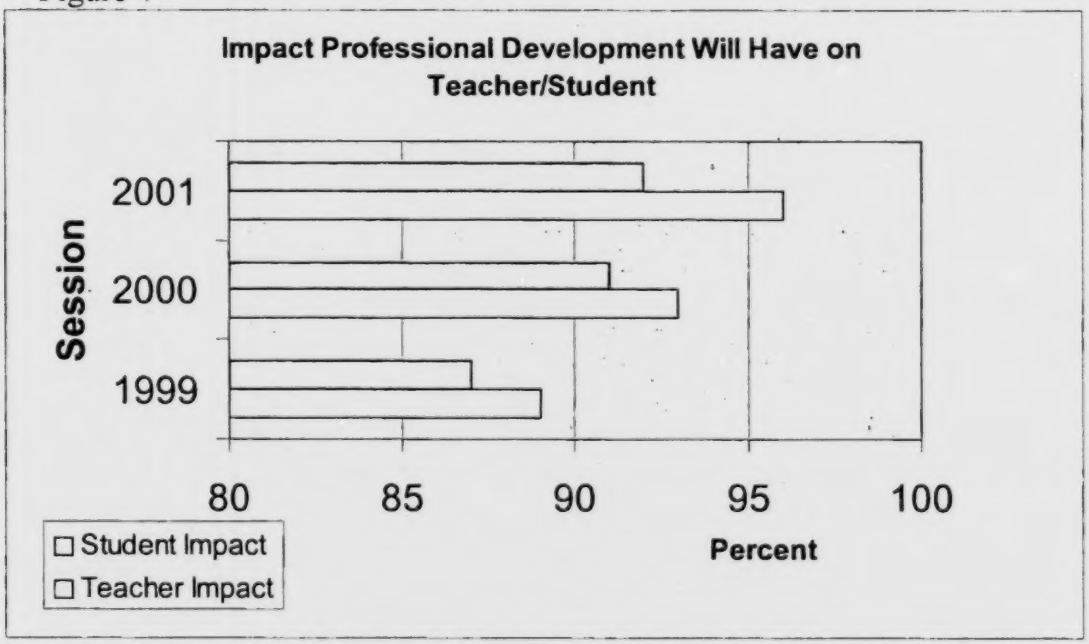

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Table 5 - Example Responses of Grading and Reporting Support Meeting Notes

From November 26, 2001

Name School	*What guidelines have you decided to implement in your classroom? What have you done so far?*	*What successes have you had? What is working?*	*What difficulties have you experienced?*	*What questions or concerns do you have?*
Tyndall Elementary Teacher 1	▪ I have tried to align my lessons and assessments to the standards ▪ I also been working on grading fair and meaningfully.	▪ Using Beacon lessons. This forces me to be on target with standards. ▪ Grading students on what they produce rather than behavior.	▪ Accepting that it is ok to not average students' grades that are 0's due to not turning in work, etc. ▪ Grading standards only (especially in isolation)	▪ How to set up a checklist of standards and specific assessments
Tyndall Elementary Teacher 2	▪ I have stopped counting zeros in averages ▪ I've utilized Beacon to teach/assess benchmarks directly ▪ I have chosen vocabulary in the standards to post in the room for the kids	▪ Kid's grades are a truer reflection of their ability and kids are much more aware of the benchmarks ▪ Some assessments are better aligned to the standards	▪ I've had a hard time setting up assessments in the grade book to show alignment to the standards ▪ It is difficult to design assessments that focus on standards in reading – specific to novels ▪ Not enough work samples to provide formative assessments, lack of materials, lack of copies, lack of standards-based material	▪ Can we see models of what other teachers do for grade books?
Tommy Smith School Teacher 3	My grades reflect the standards that I am teaching. I find myself using more formative than summative.	I give more chances for a student to master a standard before giving the final grade.	I don't want to "erase" any grades. I want to keep them to show growth.	When do you know that you have given a student "enough" time and chances and decide to move on?

Table 5 gives some teachers responses and outlines the types of questions teachers asked when follow-up sessions were held. The district staff took the responses seriously. For example, when Teacher 2 asked about examples of grade book formats from other teachers the district began to collect various examples from teachers to share with others on how to set up a grade book to report to standards. Books were also purchased for schools that contained examples that teachers were able to review and use as a guide to make their changes. Thus, the district worked to make sure the support for implementing changes was there.

4) What changes did teachers report making in their classrooms?

The whole area of grading and reporting is very difficult for districts to address with teachers because, in many situations, there are no easy answers. Emerging literature, however, suggests some common issues or practices that teachers should question in order to develop meaningful classroom assessment and grading and reporting practices. For example, do teachers organize their grade books around traditional assessment methods or state standards? Which assignments are more formative in nature and how are these addressed in the grading scheme? Which assessments are summative in nature and how are they weighted for grades? How is missing work handled? The three cohorts of teachers in this district project were asked to work on any of these issues during the school year. They were asked to complete "action journals" on the changes they made. These journals along with examples of the work implemented, reflective follow-up questions, post surveys, and classroom observations were used to formulate a clear picture of classroom implementation efforts. Those areas of implementation are noted in Table 6 below.

Teachers from each cohort completed the pre-rating at the beginning of the training and the post rating at the end of the year. Pre and post ratings were received from all participating teachers.

Teachers reported they grew in their understanding and use of the categories listed in Table 6. It is interesting to note that the greatest growth area was number 6 – "I assign grades based on achievement of standards rather than as a means of motivation." However, when we reviewed teacher evidence and visited classrooms to see how the standards were being addressed, we saw very little evidence to support their claims. There were a few teachers who we felt they were doing a good job, but overall we were disappointed with their performance. It seems that the teachers did not know what they should know, meaning they could not judge their own performance accordingly. All areas listed in Table 6 show over 50% of teachers reported growth in each of the six areas. Upon closer examination and observations made in their classrooms there were some teachers who still did not fully understand how to apply formative/summative assessment strategies to get at student learning. Many did get at numbers 4, 5, and 6. However, this could be mostly a result of Florida State law on what could be reported as part of student achievement.

TABLE 6 GREATEST PERCENTAGE OF GROWTH REPORTED BY TEACHERS FROM PRE TO POST					
Category for Change	1 Not Started	2 Thinking and Planning	3 Beginning Implementation	4 Expanding Implementation	5 Met Goal Full Implementation
1) I use formative and summative methods to collect information about students.	**0**	**0**	**19**	**53**	**28**
2) I place more emphasis on the most recent information collected on cumulative knowledge and skills to determine and report student grades.	**0**	**3**	**37**	**44**	**16**
3) I determine grades based on individual achievement of content standards.	**0**	**6**	**41**	**25**	**28**
4) I grade and report student progress and achievement based on Florida standards/benchmarks	**0**	**0**	**28**	**44**	**28**
5) I inform students about grading criteria and methods used for determining grades.	**0**	**0**	**3**	**53**	**44**
6) I assign grades based on achievement of standards rather than as a means of motivation	**0**	**0**	**0**	**25**	**75**

An examination of submitted classroom documents revealed that some teachers made substantive changes in their classroom practices. An elementary art teacher from Cherry Street Elementary School submitted the following grade book sample (Sample 1). It is evident from the grade book organization that this teacher has organized her grades around the two major art state standards: VA.A – Skills and Techniques; and VA.B – Creation and Communication. Specific assessment data is recorded in the grade book as evidence of mastery of these identified standards. Other documents from this teacher's classroom also indicate that each assessment is designed to measure these standards through teacher-developed rubrics.

ART GRADEBOOK FIRST NINE WEEKS CLASS GRADE PERIOD STUDENT NAME	PROGRESS REPORT (TEACHER OBSERVATION)	SKILLS & TECHNIQUES VA.A STRAND	CREATION & COMMUNICATION VA.B STRAND	TOTAL	NOTES	REPORT CARD GRADE	COMMENT

Sample 1 Grade Book Submitted by a Cherry Street Elementary School Teacher in Bay District Schools

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A kindergarten teacher from Patronis Elementary School developed the following Standards Documentation Log (Sample 2). The teacher uses the log as an organizing structure for her assessment portfolios. The portfolios house copies of classroom assessments that demonstrate achievement of state kindergarten standards. It is evident, that this teacher has moved beyond merely addressing the standards in her instructional practices. She has established structures to document achievement of standards for each individual student in her class. The following log allows this teacher to track mastery of individual standards for each student along with a mastery date. Copies of actual assessment documents within the portfolio provide additional evidence of student achievement.

Sample 2 Standards Log Created by a Patronis Elementary School Teacher
Bay District Schools

Student Name:

Measurement	Date	Mastery
Standard 1: The student measures quantities in the real world and uses measures to solve problems. **MA.B.1.1.1**		
▪ knows how to communicate measurement concepts		
▪ nonstandard measurement of length of objects and distance		
▪ weighs objects to explore heavier and lighter		
▪ describes concept of time (before / after, day / night)		
▪ describes concept of temperature (hot / cold)		
▪ compares and demonstrates concept of capacity (full / empty)		
MA.B.1.1.2		
▪ uses nonstandard objects to measure classroom objects		
Standard 2: The student compares, contrasts, and converts, within systems of measurement **MA.B.2.1.1**		
▪ uses direct (side-by-side) comparison to sort and order by length		
▪ uses indirect comparisons to compare lengths that cannot be physically compared (objects in different locations)		
▪ compares and orders classroom objects by weight (more / less / same)		
MA.B.2.1.2		
▪ uses uniform nonstandard units to measure common objects		
Standard 3: The student estimates measurements in real-world problem situations **MA.B.3.1.1**		
▪ uses nonstandard units to estimate and verify by measuring length and width		
▪ estimates and measures time of day as morning, afternoon, night, yesterday, today, and tomorrow		
▪ knows which of two daily activities takes more or less time		
▪ knows and compares value of penny, nickel, and dime		
Standard 4: The student selects and uses appropriate units and instruments for measurement to achieve the degree of precision and accuracy required in real-world situations **MA.B.4.1.1**		
▪ uses nonstandard units appropriately (pencil / cubes / rice)		
MA.B.4.1.2		
▪ knows various measuring tools for measuring length, width, and capacity		
▪ knows ways to measure time, including calendar, days, weeks, and months		

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5) **What were some of the actual changes teachers made, the impacts noted, and any unexpected outcomes from the change?**

Tables 6-11 summarize some of the actual changes teachers reportedly made; the impacts they noted and any observations or unexpected outcomes that came from the change. These tables reflect teacher comments in six key areas:

1. Communication of grading procedures to students.
2. Communicating with parents.
3. Grade book changes
4. Student involvement in assessment
5. Classroom grading policy changes
6. Changes in classroom assessment practices

Table 6 - Communication of grading procedures to students

What Changes Did I Make?	What Impact(s) Did I Note?	Observations/Unexpected Outcomes
- Checklist to evaluate rough drafts so that requirements are clearly communicated and met - Verbally tell students when I'm doing formative assessment for me and when I'm doing summative assessment for a grade - Feedback conferences, revised rubrics - Verbally emphasized mastery of benchmarks, not just test grades	◦ Students were more relaxed knowing an assessment was a progress indicator or growth (formative) then felt more confident on final test (summative) ◦ Treating students with respect by allowing them to have feedback and giving them the expectations up front has been very positive	◦ Students are getting a better understanding of the writing process ◦ I like the way the students are responding I found their level of understanding far greater than I expected. ◦ Exam scores were an all time high, not in just grade value! ◦ Students need more encouragement or positive reinforcement for showing improvement in work or on tests ◦ There is still too much apathy toward school ◦ Need to find more time for feedback and student conferences

Teacher comments in this area indicate that teachers are making an effort to provide more information to students regarding assessment criteria and areas for additional growth. Reported impacts in this area indicate specific benefits for students including providing a classroom atmosphere focused more on learning and encouraging student involvement in the assessment process. Furthermore, several teachers reported increases in student understanding, and in some cases, student grades. Some concerns still exist including finding time to provide more student feedback and encouraging student motivation.

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Table 7 - Communicating with parents

What Changes Did I Make?	What Impact(s) Did I Note?	Observations/Unexpected Outcomes
- Letter to parents reflecting the % of reading completed and math - Created a report card informing students & parents about Florida Goal 3 standard related behaviors - More parent notification about grades, reading levels, work habits - Math night to inform parents of FCAT. They took a sample test - Contacted parents concerning missing assignments - Requested parental input on rubric creation	◇ Students and parents are better informed of the SSS and are better able to assist the teacher in covering them ◇ Parents were now clear on how to help their child ◇ Parent conversations/ phone calls were specific and sharing of ideas helpful for student achievement ◇ Parents took a more active role in the drafting process	○ Parental response was not what we had hoped ○ More parent notification didn't seem to make much impact

Teacher comments reveal efforts to expand classroom communication systems to include multiple methods and formats. Many teachers developed new reporting formats that were used to supplement the standard district report to parents. Reported impacts in this area indicate that the additional information helped parents understand instructional goals and also encouraged more active parent involvement. In some cases, however, parent response did not meet teacher expectations or make an impact for students.

Table 8 - Grade book changes

What Changes Did I Make?	What Impact(s) Did I Note?	Observations/Unexpected Outcomes
- Grade book redesign in place and being used - Reconstructed my grade sheet - Changed weighting formula - Separated formative and summative assessments using only summative in grade - Formative and summative sections were placed in grade book - Reconstructed my grade sheet several times. The grade sheets reflected the formative piece in one color and the summative in another - The grades reflected in the report card are from the summative entries only - Recorded my grades using benchmarks on which the students were assessed - Formative stage recorded in blue or black ink; summative assessments recorded in red ink	◆ Class grades are higher this year than in the past years ◆ Students final averages more accurately reflected what they had learned fewer grades but I believe those grades showed a better picture of the students' knowledge of the standards ◆ The benchmarks are more easily identified ◆ Fewer failure grades because students were able to "correct errors" before turning in final work	○ Noticed that this plan of action takes a considerable amount of additional time in grading (regarding) papers, as well as in changing grades in the grade book ○ There should be more formative work and markings than summative grades ○ Summative grades should be weighted based on their importance and students should know the weighting formula ○ My class grades were higher from last year, but I did not see a dramatic increase in grades through the grading period

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Many teachers selected to make changes in the format and design of their grade book. Teacher comments in this area indicate that teachers changed the weighting of individual assessment scores, separated formative and summative marks, and reorganized the grade book structure around standards/benchmarks rather than assessment methods. Reported impacts in this area indicate that final summative grades more accurately reflect student achievement. They also indicate a decrease in student failures and an overall increase in classroom grades. It was reported, however, that implementing these changes does require a considerable amount of teacher time.

Table 9 - Student involvement in assessment

What Changes Did I Make?	What Impact(s) Did I Note?	Observations/Unexpected Outcomes
- Students choose how their spelling final grade is calculated by mean or median. - Letting my students be a part of assessment planning and scheduling - Created rubrics that students graded - Increased student participation in creation of assessment materials (rubrics, projects, test questions) - Students self-assessed more - Incorporated students input on rubrics - Allow students to actually build rubric	◦ Students enthusiasm about spelling grade changes, ◦ Students enjoy grading their own papers with a highlighter, ◦ Listening skills are improving ◦ Students worked harder on their projects because they helped design the rubric for grading the project ◦ Found that students understand better what is expected when they work on rubrics for the project	▫ I thought my students would jump at the chance to determine their curriculum, to create their own rubrics, and to judge their work. I was wrong. ▫ They felt more involved in determining their grade, which made them work harder for that "A."

Comments in this area indicate that teachers made efforts to involve students in the assessment process in several ways. Students were allowed to make decisions regarding grading procedures, provide input into assessment schedules, participate in the development of scoring rubrics, and self-assess their own work. Teachers reported that students had a better understanding of expectations for achievement and were more motivated to complete projects. In some cases, however, students did not respond positively to invitations for increased involvement in the assessment process.

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Table 10 - Classroom grading policy change

What Changes Did I Make?	What Impact(s) Did I Note?	Observations/Unexpected Outcomes
- Summative more/ formative less) - Revised summative assessments to reflect the new Grade Level Expectations (GLE's) - Revised formative and summative assessments to reflect FCAT format and Bloom's Taxonomy - No longer grade everything - Decreased the percent of formative effort that is included in the grade. Increased the percent of summative effort included in the grade - Did not take off for "late" assignments - Counted more recent grades - I assigned letter grades only to major projects and tests, and used a system of checkmarks to track whether students were completing homework and class work - Dropped zero grades	◆ Students overall nine week grades were a better reflection of their ability and not their efforts (fewer A's & F's; more B's & C's) ◆ From the revisions in the weights of grades I saw an improvement in overall grades ◆ Overall failure rate at the end of 9-wks was .082% (12 out of 145) ◆ I noticed that there are less F's and D's overall and that by allowing students to make corrections, it usually brings their grade up by one letter ◆ Teacher stress level dropped b/c we mark formative work in class and my "grading" time is greatly reduced ◆ Stress level of students dropped because not every day's work was a grade ◆ Students seem to grasp the curriculum better ◆ Higher achievement from borderline students I taught last year ◆ Students were more willing to take risks on formative assessments	○ I realized a lot of the assessments I had been doing didn't reflect the Sunshine State Standards so I had to look at both the assignments and assessments and make sure that these were relevant ○ Because of phone calls and other opportunities for students to complete assignments, I gave fewer zeros and grades were improved ○ Students overall grades will improve if zeros are dropped and students are given an opportunity to retake a failed exam or make-up a missing assignment ○ Portfolios are a good way to indicate progress

Changes in classroom grading policies were common among implementing teachers. Comments in this area indicate that a variety of changes were implemented including revised formative and summative policies, decreased number of "graded" assignments, reduced penalties for late work, increased emphasis on the "most recent" assessment evidence, and reduced use of "zero" grades. Reported impacts in this are indicate a reduced stress level for both teachers and students regarding grading issues. One teacher also reported that students were more willing to take risks on formative assessments. Several teachers reported an overall increase in student achievement as measured by classroom grades. Reduced use of "zero" grades and increased opportunities to retake assessments and improve work are cited as reasons for increases in overall student scores.

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Table 11 - Changes in classroom assessment practices

What Changes Did I Make?	What Impact(s) Did I Note?	Observations/Unexpected Outcomes
- Individual portfolios for students - I gave extended time to complete class work, projects and tests - Students are given the opportunity to complete or redo assignments - Students are given the opportunity to re-take tests and quizzes after or before - Students are given extended time on assignments - Re-taught units in which the students did not show mastery in summative effort - Not limit my assessment methods to tests and quizzes this year - I have had students do writing assignments and various other projects and presentations. - Spent more time in discussions about specific questions by students - Gave a choice for essay or oral report; provided extra video's for student to watch; offered opportunity for one on one skill work for students who wanted it - Revised project to incorporate various subjects (technology, English, Soc. Studies) through the use of Sunshine State Standards - Built-in time for retesting - Made an attempt to not grade every assignment as was my former practice	◦ Students seemed to be more meticulous about rough drafts rather than omitting this process ◦ Students were more receptive to criticism in this less threatening situation. They know they had a second chance. ◦ Parents also appreciated the feedback ◦ Students liked their portfolios and were able to "show" improvement ◦ Quality of pieces seemed better overall ◦ Better student feedback, and greater student confidence ◦ Students' self-esteem seems to have improved with chance to do better ◦ The quality of the summative product increased- especially when I re-taught a unit ◦ An increased student desire to achieve at their highest level ◦ Near absence of discipline problems ◦ Noticed that some students took responsibility and completed work as the term went on instead of waiting to the last minute ◦ Students understood the subject matter more because they applied their knowledge instead of memorizing the information necessary for exams ◦ Student response overwhelmingly positive ◦ Students really matured as independent learners	Positives ◦ My students were not afraid to try and showed a better understanding of content. They could re-do, revise or choose the final product to be graded ◦ Students enjoyed the projects- they created more for their project than was required. ◦ They appear to feel more accountable for their work ◦ These regular frequent assessment pieces helped the flow of curriculum. Our moving through the benchmarks with numerous ways of assessing made progress more obvious ◦ They were concerned about the appearance of their projects and had a lot of fun learning the subject matter through the project ◦ Students were retaining more useful knowledge and recalling it better ◦ Students will try to improve their grades if given the chance and the knowledge of the mistakes that they made ◦ When given the chance to correct work after practice time, students almost always improved Negatives: ◦ Students are still experiencing difficulty in completing work in class and returning homework ◦ Few children took the opportunity to re-take the test, although most who did scored higher ◦ Attendance and make-up work is a major problem ◦ I thought more students would be "interested" in improving their grades. Many are NOT ◦ With no penalty for late work, some students became habitually late on assignments

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Teacher comments indicate a variety of changes to classroom assessment practices. Changed assessment strategies included providing choices of assessment formats, increasing variety of assessment types, integrating various subject areas, providing opportunities to retake tests, providing extended time, and implementing student portfolios. Reported impacts in this area indicated a variety of benefits for students. These benefits included increased understanding, reduced discipline problems, and increased motivation and self-esteem. Several comments also indicate that students were taking more ownership of their learning and were more accountable for their work. Some concerns existed, however, regarding completing assignments on time.

Overall, these teachers' summaries for impacts showed that the teacher was thinking about what they were doing in terms of impacting the learning process in the classroom. Students and parents were asked about the impacts of some of the changes the teachers made. These comments were recorded and a few interesting questions and comments are shared below.

Students in focus group settings were asked: (see all questions used in Appendix A)

If you are given the opportunity to redo your work, do you do your best work on the first try?

All fifteen students who responded stated that they would do their best work on the first try. Some of the comments include:

- Yeah, because I know if I can do my best I won't have to retake it.
- Well, I think I personally definitely try to do my best work the first time and if I have to redo it yeah I'd try even harder if I didn't do that well the first time.
- Yeah, I don't really want to do it over, so I take the time the first time to do it right.

Does redoing your work improve your grade?

Eleven of fifteen respondents said "Yes" redoing your work improves your grade.

Which type of feedback is the most helpful?

Twelve out of 13 students, from a focus group of elementary, middle, and high school mentioned individual conversations with the teacher as the most helpful type of feedback. Some of the comments include:

- I think the most helpful feedback to me would probably the individual help (one-on-one)
- I mostly like it when she calls us back because she'll explain something better than when she writes it on our paper and I understand it better
- I'd kind of rather like one on one because I can understand her a lot better and ask questions about it.

Do you know what standards and benchmarks are being taught in your class?

The majority of students (8 out of 14) said "No" to this question, three students said "yes", and three students were uncertain.

Do you think your teacher's grading system is fairer as a result of the changes made for this project?

Seven out of 10 respondents said, "yes" that their teacher's grading system is fairer as a result of the changes. Some of the comments include:

- Yeah, my teacher she really wants you to know the material and she'll go over it with you as many times as you need for you to learn it. And she like takes time before school and after school or even during lunch she does that.
- I think it gives an opportunity for people to learn easier and if they don't get it the first time it increases their learning ability by giving them a second chance.
- Yes, I think it's fairer except when people take advantage of the system.

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From these sample comments, it seems that teachers still need to work on helping their students understand the standards and benchmarks they are required to learn. This was also evident when classroom observations were conducted and we saw some evidence of teachers helping students understand the standards and benchmarks they were working on but not what we hoped. However, due to some of the changes noted in the grade book, we can infer that the wording or vocabulary presented to the students around standards and benchmarks may be one underlying problem in the responses we collected.

Focus groups sessions were also held with parents during this 3-year period. In these sessions, an independent evaluator asked a representative group of parents questions regarding the impact of teacher classroom change. One of the biggest barriers to this qualitative information, however, was parent perceptions of what they thought assessment, grading and reporting practices were suppose to mimic and their understanding of the educational language. However, some comments were worth noting.

Are grading methods different from other teacher?

"I actually would like to say that I wish all the teachers could use this method of helping the children out, and building them, and showing them that some children are best at writing, some are best at doing the math and some are best at reporting orally. And if every teacher could work like that with their children, I think we would have well-rounded kids. The ones that are a little bit shaky in some areas would find that they are so much better in other things, and that everyone is gifted in this world. I think that we would have a lot of people growing up to feel confident and working for what they really want not what they thought they could do because other teachers gave a,b,c,d, ,f and they thought, "Well, I wasn't really as good as so and so, so maybe I cannot be a nurse." When they could actually be a nurse because they have other skills that they haven't found a way of bringing them out.

Do you know which standards are being taught? Mastered?

"Well, I do. I know what they are supposed to be achieving."

"Yes, pretty much."

Does Ms. -- include participation, homework, behavior, etc. in the student's grade? Are her methods different from other teachers?

"Yes, she doesn't put it in the report card, but she does it like in her own little report that she sends every so often and she includes the progress of the child and by all the extra work that they get to do. For example, if they have a lot of reading projects and reports that they have to present to the class she's not only working with what the curriculum is asking, but she's also teaching them that they can also stand in front of the class and learn how to explore that area, where they can talk to other people and they're successful doing different things. Different children show what they can do in different ways. Well, she really can't include all these things in the report card grade because of the way the report card is. I wish that every teacher could work with their own report card in someway and I think that the parents would be much better satisfied, and the children would feel much better about themselves also.

These selected comments indicate that parents are aware of changes to teacher practice and that, in many cases; they support and prefer these practices. Parents specifically mentioned they appreciated additional, expanded communication provided by the teacher regarding student progress, success, and areas for improvement.

Conclusion

Collected evidence indicates that teachers are making efforts to implement changes in their classrooms with support from their district. The level of this change, however, has not met with current district expectations. It is clear that additional work and possibly alternative strategies should be instituted to provide the necessary support for teachers implementing the changes. In some cases, these alternative strategies may require institutional changes at the district level to reform traditional staff development structures. This information should be useful for the district when planning next steps on their systemic approach to involving all teachers in this professional development.

We refer back to our outcomes on Figure 4 on page 11 for the professional development section to conclude if these were actually fulfilled. From the prior knowledge surveys, end-of-training evaluation forms, pre and post self-ratings, and reflective journals we summarized that most of the outcomes were met, but some still may need some attention.

Outcomes for Professional Development Initiative:

1) All schools within this district would have a team to participate in the initial training prior to rolling out this Professional Development model in the next Phase. To date all schools have participated to some degree with the professional development with 37 of 40 having school teams involved.

2) That the professional development be rated highly by the participants. The professional development was highly rated and continued to increase as revisions to the training were made. The professional development is currently being delivered in a systematic manner within the district (see recommendations list in Appendix C).

3) The professional development training had to be aligned closely with the Classroom Assessment Guidelines if these were to become part of district policy on what constituted a quality assessment environment for students and teachers. These guidelines were used as the outlining factor within the professional development model and serve as anchors or guides for teachers in their implementation process for changes they made. The teachers provided meaningful feedback on these guidelines as they tried to implement them.

4) The content for the strategies learned is transferred into the classroom practice. This area is slowest for change and time is probably a key factor here. There are again, teachers who have made gains in their thinking and made significant changes to get at better classroom assessment, grading and reporting practices that reflect standards. However, it seems to be 'one teacher at a time.' Additional follow-up support for implementation is recommended to support teacher change.

5) Professional development is customized to meet specific system and teacher needs. From the recommendations and evaluations, the teachers seemed satisfied with the professional development they were given and are recommending this for all teachers within the district.

6) Flexible professional development that provides multiple forms of job-embedded learning that are tied to specific teacher needs. Non-traditional professional development formats that provide flexibility for individual teachers were a recommendation for this work (from teacher teams) as well as future professional development for the district to increase implementation and sustain any teacher change. The professional development format was directly tied to daily classroom practices and provided follow-up support during the implementation process.

EDUCATIONAL IMPORTANCE

For the past ten years, SERVE has worked with various districts on classroom assessment and we are learning a tremendous amount about what it will take for professional development to be effective for teachers to make changes in their current practices around classroom assessment. For example, a good training program must push teachers to think about their current grading practices, explore research support, make connections and applications, and create ways to reflect on practice.

We have also learned that for teachers to report to standards, the current grade book must be designed to help them report to standards – the traditional grade book format that teachers are given at the beginning of each school year does not push teachers to report to standards.

If standards define a common vision for student learning then standards-based grading and reporting practices need to support it. However, actually applying this concept to the classroom or school where there is limited knowledge or understanding on how to do this is NOT practical or realistic. Teachers cannot do this alone, they need support in terms of knowledgeable people, resources to help them, and the time to make this transition before some new effort comes around.

Bay District is continuing on its journey with training of the whole staff. However, they have decided that they can give teachers some choice in how they want to receive their standards based grading and reporting professional development. In 2003, the district began to rollout a classroom implementation plan that will include a self-assessment for teachers so they can determine where they are in the process and chose the right professional development path to meet their needs. SERVE will continue to follow this district's journey down the path to becoming a standards based district.

From this three-year district study, we conclude that more research is needed on how best to structure professional development on classroom assessment that will build teacher assessment literacy and help districts/schools move forward in promoting grading and reporting to standards. For example, 'how can' and 'should' districts:

1. Offer year-long, job-embedded courses on classroom assessment,
2. Organize and support teacher "learning teams" who engage in self-study,

3. Provide quality assessment materials to teachers along with opportunities to talk with other teachers about student results on those assessments,
4. Mandate teacher participation in the initiatives involving assessment,
5. Offer individualized feedback to teachers on how they can improve their use of assessment,
6. Look more closely at the link between good assessment and the instructional strategies that teachers use to support the assessment,
7. Consider strategies that provide on-going support for teachers that will be needed during the classroom implementation process for the changes the district desires?

From our past experiences with working intensively with this district and others, special attention needs to be paid to number five. This strategy may be one of the hardest to address in terms of providing 'good' professional development.

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Appendix

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Classroom Grading Practices / Pre-Survey

Date _____ Name/Identifier _____

School _____ Course/Grade Level _____

Please respond to the following questions.

1. **How was your grade book set up last year? What was the basic organizing structure? (e.g., dates, assessment methods, standards, etc.) Include an example or a sample copy of a page from your grade book, if possible.**

_____

_____

_____

_____

Example ~

2. ***Did you count any of the following as a part of the grade?***

☐ *Homework*	_____ *% of grade*
☐ *Participation*	_____ *% of grade*
☐ *Group Work*	_____ *% of grade*
☐ *Attendance*	_____ *% of grade*
☐ *Tardiness*	_____ *% of grade*
☐ *Classroom Behavior*	_____ *% of grade*
☐ *Notebook – Organization*	_____ *% of grade*
☐ *Others* _____	_____ *% of grade*
_____	_____ *% of grade*

3. ***Choose one ~***

☐ **Zero scores were averaged into final grades**
☐ **Zero scores were not averaged into final grades**

4. ***Did all assignments count toward your final grade? Indicate below how much was counted.***

☐ **All work counted** ☐ **75% counted** ☐ **other ____%**
☐ **50% counted** ☐ **25% counted**

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5. ***Did you provide individual formative feedback to students on their learning progress before assignments that count in final grades were assigned? If yes, what information did you share, and how often?***

6. ***Did you feel any pressure in your school to distribute your grades along a bell (or normal) curve?***

7. ***What impact did your approach to grading have on students' attitudes toward learning? Were these impacts positive or negative?***

8. ***What concerns/questions did you have about grading practices in your school? In the district? In general?***

9. ***What information did you provide to your students regarding your grading practices? Please describe and/or provide a copy, if possible.***

10. ***What information did you provide to parents regarding your grading practices? Please describe and/or include a copy, if possible.***

11. ***Did you use a computer program to calculate your grades? If so, which one did you use and what were the benefits and problems with the program?***

Journal Entries for Planning Stage

1. ***What do I want to work on? (What is my goal?)***

2. ***What key factors do I need to consider in working toward this goal? (State these factors as questions.)***

3. ***What step(s) am I going to take to implement this goal?***

4. ***What indicators will I have to show the goal has been attained?***

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Journal Entries for Action Stage

1. ***What modification(s) did I make?***

2. ***What impact(s) did I note? (Include both quantitative and qualitative data or evidence.)***

3. ***What inference(s) did I make from the data or evidence and what action(s) did I take?***

4. ***If I made this or similar change(s) again, what advice would I give others?***

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Grading and Reporting Focus Groups
Student Questions

Formative / Summative Assessment

1. Does your teacher count all of the work you do in class for a grade? If no, what assignments do not count?
2. What is included in the grade for your class?
3. What assignments / tests count the most?
4. Are there some assignments that are meant for practice instead of a grade?
5. Do you like having assignments that are designed for practice? Why?
6. How many tests/exams does your teacher give the class?

Feedback / Redos / Additional Time

1. Does your teacher (give you feedback about) (explain how you can improve) the work you do in class?
2. Do you like receiving specific feedback about your work?
3. How does your teacher let you know how you are doing in class?
4. Are you given a chance to correct mistakes you make on your work?
5. Does you teacher give you additional time to complete projects / assignments?
6. How do you feel about being given additional time to correct your work?
7. If you are given the opportunity to redo your work, do you do your best work on the first try?
8. Can you improve your grade if you correct mistakes on your work?
9. If you do not do well on an assignment, does your teacher require you to do it over?
10. How does your teacher grade work that has been redone?

"0" Grades

1. Does your teacher count "0" grades?
2. Are you allowed time to make up tests / exams that you miss?
3. Are you allowed time to retake a test that you did poorly on?
4. If you turn in an assignment late, do you get a "0" on the assignment, or are you given additional time to complete the work?
5. How do you feel about being given the opportunity to make up missed exams?
6. How do you feel about being given additional time to complete work?

Standards / Benchmarks

1. Do you know what standards and benchmarks are being taught in your class?
2. Does your teacher let you know which standards you have learned and which ones you need to work on?

General

1. Do you think that your teacher's grading system is fair? Why or why not?
2. Does Mrs. _____ grade your work differently from other teachers? In what way?

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Grading and Reporting Focus Groups
Parent Questions

Classroom Grading Practices

1. How does Ms. _____ grade your child? Are her grading methods different from other teachers?
2. What do you think your child's report card grade means?
3. Do you feel that the grade accurately reflects your child's knowledge/understanding of the curriculum?
4. Does Ms. _____ include participation, homework, behavior, etc., in the student's grade? Are her methods different from other teachers?
5. Do you feel that the grading system is fair?
6. Do you think that "0" grades are fair?
7. Can your child explain how (s)he is graded?
8. How does your child feel when (s)he gets a low grade?

Parent Communication / Reports

1. How does Ms. _____ communicate with you about your child's achievement? Are her methods different from other teachers?
2. What types / formats are used? (letters, phone calls, conferences, additional reports, etc.)
3. Does Ms. _____ give you extra information in addition to the basic report card? If so, what? Are her methods different from other teachers?
4. Does Ms. _____ provide information to students and parents about the Sunshine State Standards? Do you know which standards are being taught? Mastered?
5. Do you receive information about the standards from other teachers?
6. What additional information would you like reported?

SERVE Grading & Reporting Following Up Session Interview Questions

1. Did you attend all of the G&R training sessions? ___ Yes ___ No
   If NO, what did you miss?

2. TRAINING: What comes to mind when you think about the professional development you have experienced as part of this project – has your reaction been mostly positive or mostly negative or somewhere in between and why?

   a. More specifically, thinking about this experience as an opportunity for personal professional growth through reflection on your assessment practices (in grading), what aspects of the professional development experiences provided
      i. Really helped your reflection and classroom experimentation in this area
      ii. Didn't work for you as a learner

   b. What if anything should the district change or rethink as it offers this growth opportunity to more teachers in the future?

3. IMPACT: In a general way, can you describe the level of impact participating in this project has had on your thinking and practice relative to other professional development experiences you have had?

   a. More specifically, what, if anything, are you doing differently in your classroom as a result of this professional development?
   b. What concerns, questions, barriers, if any, still or currently exist for you in reflecting on and improving your assessment practices?

4. How do your organize your grade book – by assessment methods or standards or some other way?
   a. Has how you organize your grade book changed during this project experience and if so, why?
   b. What concerns, questions, barriers, if any, still or currently exist for you in thinking about the best way to organize your grade book?

5. How has your thinking changed, if at all, about the distinction between formative and summative assessment in your classroom?
   a. Can you give us an example of how you are making the distinction between formative and summative purposes for your assessments?
   b. Based on your experiences, how important do you think this distinction is for student motivation and learning?

6. How do you go about ensuring that students have a clear understanding of the level and kind of performance you expect of them on each summative assessment?

7. What is your philosophy about "giving As" ?
    a. What questions or concerns do you have about giving As?
    b. To what extent do you think standards for what constitutes a "passing grade" or grade level proficiency in an area are consistent across teachers?

8. Any final comments, questions, or concerns about Grading and Reporting that you think the district needs to address.

Considerations for Creation of Student/Parent Focus Groups

Student Criteria

- Student can talk with other adults without feeling uncomfortable
- Parents agrees to allow their child to participate
- Student wants to participate
- Student can understand that the interview is not about getting the teacher in trouble but about a research project on exploring classroom dynamics
- Teacher feels the student can give honest (not exaggerated) answers based on knowledge of the classroom
- Student understands the following terminology: feedback, grade book, zero grade, tests, quizzes, homework, assessment, assignments and redo work
- Student understands the changes that are being implemented as part of this grading and reporting research project

Parent Criteria:

- Teacher has explained or worked with the parent about the changes made in the classroom related to this project (if not, we don't need a parent)
- Parent understands that this is not about a whining session or etc., but about a serious research project that deals with classroom dynamics
- Parent understands the daily operations of the classroom
- Parent knows the following terminology: grade book, feedback, worksheets, zero grades, tests, quizzes, homework, assessments, assignment, redo work
- Parent know how their child's grades are currently determined
- Parent wants to be involved

BayLinks - Goals 2000 Preservice/Inservice Grant Evaluation

Examining Grading & Reporting Practices – Pre/Post Survey

This survey is designed to document your level of implementation of the Classroom Assessment Guidelines relating to Goal 4: Grading is fair, consistent, and meaningful. Please indicate your level of implementation of each guideline **prior to** and **following** the training session: *Examining Grading & Reporting Practices.*

Use a check (4) to indicate your classroom grading practices **prior to** training (1998-1999 school year.)

Use a plus (:) to indicate your classroom grading practices **following** training (1999-2000 school year.)

Record a (4) and a (:) for each dimension/indicator.

Dimensions & Indicators	Not Yet Started 1	Thinking About & Planning 2	Beginning Implementation 3	Expanding Implementation 4	Met Goal - Full Implementation 5
1. I grade and report student progress and achievement based on Florida standards/benchmarks.					
2. I inform students about grading criteria and methods used for determining grades.					
3. I measure student attainment of standards and assign grades based on predetermined, consistent grading procedures.					
4. I use formative and summative methods to collect information about student progress; however, formative assessments form a minor part of the overall grade and summative scores form a major part of the course grade.					
5. I place more emphasis on the most recent information collected on cumulative knowledge and skills when using my professional judgment to determine and report student grades.					
6. I determine grades based on individual achievement of content standards; therefore, the *Sunshine State Standards* are the grading variables.					
7. I report information on *Florida Goal 3 Standards* related behaviors, such as effort, participation, attitude, attendance, and punctuality.					
8. I establish procedures so that any penalties that apply toward a grade do not distort student achievement of standards.					
9. I provide makeup opportunities for students who miss a summative assessment due to reasons approved by the district.					
10. I assign grades based on achievement of standards rather than as a means of motivation and control.					

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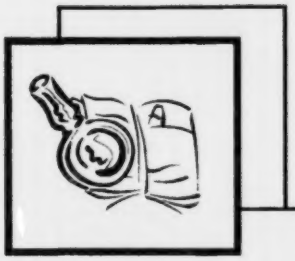

Classroom Assessment Principles, Goals, and Guidelines

The *Classroom Assessment Principles, Goals, and Guidelines* articulate a fundamental belief system for classroom assessment practice. It sets forth six guiding principles that state what we value in classroom assessment practice. Each principle is expanded by the inclusion of goals, which explain why each principle is valued as a support for student learning. Finally, guidelines are listed which explain how the principles and goals are implemented and supported in classrooms.

PRINCIPLES

What do we value in classroom assessment?

1. **The primary purpose of assessment is to improve learning for all students.**
2. **Assessment is aligned to standards.**
3. **Assessment is a process that is reflective of quality.**
4. **Grading is fair, consistent, and meaningful.**
5. **Communication among stakeholders is timely, appropriate to audience, and aligned to standards.**
6. **Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, communicated, and understood by all stakeholders.**

GOALS

Why do we value the six principles?

1. *Principle 1 - Purpose: The primary purpose of assessment is to improve learning for all students.*
   Classroom assessment should

- provide information to teachers, schools, and the district for planning, implementing, and improving instruction, curriculum, and educational programs;
- provide feedback that helps each student understand how to improve;
- guide decisions regarding grading, student placement, and student certification;
- prepare students to be successful on district and state assessments; and
- prepare students to be life-long learners and self-evaluators.

2. *Principle 2 - Standards: Assessment is aligned to standards.*
   Classroom assessment should
   - align with the standards/benchmarks established and supported by the state of Florida and the local community for all students;
   - align directly to the instructional activities utilized in classrooms; and
   - provide clear evidence of mastery of the specified standards/benchmarks.

3. *Principle 3 - Quality: Assessment is a process that is reflective of quality.*
   Classroom assessment should
   - acknowledge individual differences in learning styles through the use of multiple (varied), and appropriate types of assessment (essay, multiple choice, performance, true-false, etc.);
   - cite clear, standards-based purposes that are understood by all stakeholders;
   - provide a fair and bias-free format;
   - provide valid and reliable results; and
   - demonstrate a process rather than an event.

4. *Principle 4 - Grading: Grading is fair, consistent, and meaningful.*
   Grading practices should
   - reflect standards;
   - reflect professional judgement supported by bodies of evidence; and
   - reflect faculty collaboration and dialogue regarding consistency and application of the district guidelines.

5. *Principle 5 - Communication: Communication among stakeholders is timely, appropriate to audience, and aligned to standards.*
   Communication should
   - provide feedback to stakeholders regarding achievement of standards through a variety of methods;
   - provide assessment and evaluation information on student achievement that is clear, accurate, and timely; and
   - ensure the confidentiality of individual student data subject to legal requirements.

6. *Principle 6 - Roles and Responsibilities: Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, communicated, and understood by all stakeholders.*
   Involved stakeholders shall

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- share the responsibility for ensuring that assessment and evaluation practices are consistent with these guidelines; and
- have a clear understanding of the specific roles and responsibilities of all individuals involved in the assessment and evaluation process.

GUIDELINES

How are the principles implemented in the classroom?

1. *Principle 1 - Purpose: The primary purpose of assessment is to improve learning for <u>all</u> students.*
   - 1.1 Teachers systematically collect and record information about student achievement and progress.
   - 1.2 Teachers interpret and analyze assessment information to
     - 1.2.1 improve instruction and assessment; and
     - 1.2.2 plan and modify instruction to meet individual student needs.
   - 1.3 Teachers provide opportunities for students to set and meet individual improvement goals through
     - 1.3.1 self-assessment and self-adjustment; and
     - 1.3.2 appropriate peer assessment experiences.
   - 1.4 Schools and teachers interpret assessment information in terms of the state standards/benchmarks to form the basis for grading, placement, and certification.
   - 1.5 Schools and teachers use results from classroom, district, and state assessments to determine school improvement goals, and to decide on program changes to improve achievement on classroom, district, and state assessments.

2. *Principle 2 - Standards: Assessment is aligned to standards.*
   - 2.1 Teachers use classroom assessment/instructional processes that are clearly aligned to Florida standards/benchmarks.
   - 2.2 Teachers provide clear criteria for and exemplars/anchors of student work to clarify what is expected of students.
   - 2.3 Teachers discuss criteria and exemplars with students early in the instructional process and <u>prior to</u> assessment.
   - 2.4 Teachers evaluate student progress and achievement in relation to Florida standards/benchmarks.
   - 2.5 Teachers use appropriate standards and criteria when assessing and evaluating students with special needs.

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3. *Principle 3 - Quality: Assessment is a process that is reflective of quality.*

Assessment is a process, cyclic in nature, which occurs over time as opposed to an act that is done to students. The process should provide a holistic view of student learning and identify student strengths and weaknesses.

3.1 Teachers utilize a variety of assessment methods to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of standards.
3.2 Teachers select appropriate assessment methods that address standards, student learning styles, and when possible, authentic contexts.
3.3 Teachers identify and communicate to students a clear, standards-based purpose for all assessments.
3.4 Teachers provide students the opportunity to learn the standards and skills being assessed.
3.5 Teachers use assessment methods that are consistent with methods of instructional delivery.
3.6 Teachers use flexible approaches in establishing time requirements to complete assessments for all students.
3.7 Teachers develop assessments that provide individual students the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of standards.
3.8 Teachers provide students opportunities to practice using assessment approaches and methods prior to collecting and using information to assign grades.
3.9 Teachers use and design assessments that are as free from bias as possible.
3.10 Teachers provide students with a number of opportunities to demonstrate attainment of each standard.
3.11 Teachers use and design assessments that are valid measures of standards.
3.12 Teachers implement effective strategies for diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments.

4. *Principle 4 - Grading: Grading is fair, consistent, and meaningful.*

4.1 Teachers grade and report student progress and achievement based on Florida standards/benchmarks therefore the Sunshine State Standards are the grading variables.
4.2 Teachers inform students about grading criteria and methods used for determining grades.
4.3 Teachers measure student attainment of standards and assign grades based on predetermined, consistent grading procedures in the same courses and across grade levels.
4.4 Teachers are clear about the purpose of each assessment (diagnostic, formative, summative) used to collect information about student progress and achievement.
4.5 Teachers use evidence from summative assessments to determine all or a major part of the course achievement grade.

4.6 Teachers consider assessment evidence and standards when making professional judgments to determine and report student grades.
4.7 Teachers place more emphasis on the most recent information collected on cumulative knowledge and skills.
4.8 Teachers determine grades based on individual student achievement of standards.
4.9 Teachers separately communicate information on *Florida Goal 3 Standards* and related behaviors, such as effort, participation, attitude, attendance, and punctuality.
4.10 Teachers provide makeup opportunities for students who miss a summative assessment due to reasons approved by the district.
4.11 Schools and teachers ensure that procedures used in the determination of grades do not distort student achievement or motivation.

5. *Principle 5 - Communication: Communication among stakeholders is timely, appropriate to audience, and aligned to standards.*
5.1 Teachers provide ongoing communication about student achievement using a variety of methods, e.g., student-led parent conferencing, progress reports, portfolios, informal contacts, etc.
5.2 Teachers report student achievement in relation to Florida standards/benchmarks.
5.3 Teachers provide stakeholders with clear, accurate, and appropriate information that indicates achievement of standards.
5.4 Teachers provide students with prompt, age-appropriate feedback regarding their achievement on classroom assessments.
5.5 Teachers encourage students to become an active part of the assessment and communication process.

6. *Principle 6 - Roles and Responsibilities: Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, communicated, and understood by all stakeholders.*
Roles and responsibilities to ensure that assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices are consistent with the district's vision for improving student achievement include the following:

6.1 Teachers
6.1.1 Implement school board and state policies regarding student assessment and evaluation.
6.1.2 Implement the classroom assessment guidelines found in this document.

6.2 School Based Administrators
6.2.1 Implement school board and state policies regarding student assessment, evaluation, and reporting.
6.2.2 Develop and implement school procedures consistent with school board policies on student assessment, evaluation, and reporting.

6.2.3 Demonstrate understanding of district assessment procedures and articulate clear expectations/guidelines to staff regarding assessment, evaluation, and reporting.

6.2.4 Provide necessary resources such as time, technology, materials, and support staff to assist teachers with assessment, evaluation, and reporting.

6.2.5 Ensure consistent and secure administration of district and state mandated assessments.

6.2.6 Monitor and provide feedback to teachers regarding their assessment, grading, and reporting procedures.

6.2.7 Ensure that teachers communicate regularly, consistently, and clearly to parents/guardians about assessments and evaluations.

6.2.8 Establish and implement strategies for communicating assessment and evaluation information to all stakeholders.

6.2.9 Establish a plan to ensure collaboration and communication for assessment, evaluation, and reporting among staff who have a shared responsibility for an individual student or group of students.

6.2.10 Ensure communication of classroom and state assessment information among grade levels, departments, and feeder patterns.

6.2.11 Provide and support continuous professional development regarding assessment, evaluation, and reporting.

6.2.12 Establish a plan to ensure that assessment data is used in the development of school improvement goals and program planning.

6.3 District Staff

6.3.1 Provide ongoing support for the implementation of strategies that further the district's vision for improved student performance.

6.3.2 Provide research, expertise, and ongoing support regarding new developments and best practices related to integrated instruction, assessment, evaluation, and reporting procedures and policies.

6.3.3 Identify staff development needs, provide training opportunities, and monitor training effectiveness related to research-based and effective assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices.

6.3.4 Provide guidance and support to school staff regarding state legislative requirements.

6.3.5 Coordinate district and state assessments and report results to stakeholders.

6.3.6 Monitor the effectiveness of the articulation of student achievement data among levels, departments, and feeder patterns.

6.3.7 Provide training to school test coordinators to assure the consistent and secure administration of standardized tests.

6.3.8 Assist teachers to plan program modifications for students who are functioning well above or below standards for their level.

6.3.9 Conduct specialized assessments of students referred by schools and assist in communicating results to school staff, students, and parents.

6.3.10 Provide support to school staff in the development of research-based and data-driven school improvement plans and monitor the effectiveness of those plans.

6.3.11 Ensure that school board documents support the principles and procedures contained in this document.

6.3.12 Advise principals regarding the interpretation of school board policies and procedures on student assessment, evaluation, and reporting, and their implementation in schools.

6.3.13 Support school administration teams, teachers, and district staff in the implementation of new assessment, evaluation, and reporting policies and procedures and monitor the implementation on an ongoing basis.

6.3.14 Supervise the acquisition and development of resource materials needed to support student assessment, evaluation, and reporting within the system.

6.3.15 Ensure that appropriate procedures are followed for decisions about student placement.

6.4 School Board Members

6.4.1 Receive reports relating to assessment and evaluation.

6.4.2 Regularly review policies on assessment and evaluation.

6.4.3 Support effective and research-based assessment practices through district policies and budget priorities.

6.5 School Advisory Councils

6.5.1 Provide feedback to the principal regarding the clarity of assessment information and student achievement reports.

6.6 Students

6.6.1 Develop an understanding of their own learning style, strengths, and weaknesses.

6.6.2 Understand the standards for each level of achievement and identify them in their own work.

6.6.3 Share responsibility for their learning and achievement by reflecting on their performance and progress, setting achievement goals, and taking steps for improvement.

6.6.4 Play an active role in classroom assessment by being involved in the planning, implementation, and tracking of progress over time.

6.6.5 Develop self and peer assessment skills.

GLOSSARY

Achievement	the demonstration of student performance measured against standards/benchmarks
Achievement Levels	descriptions of the degree of achievement as outlined by the Sunshine State Standards
Alternative	assessments in which students create a response to a question rather than choose a response from a given list
Anchor Papers	samples of student work that demonstrate each level of achievement
Assessment	the gathering and interpreting of information about a student or group of students using a variety of tools and techniques for the purpose of understanding and enhancing student learning
Authentic	assessment tasks in which students demonstrate their knowledge and skills in ways that resemble "real life" as closely as possible
Benchmark	a statement of expectations about student knowledge and skills at the end of one of four developmental levels of the Sunshine State Standards
Criteria	the characteristics or dimensions of student performance
Criterion-Referenced	assessment of students' success in meeting stated expectations or standards
Diagnostic	assessment/evaluation carried out prior to instruction that is designed to determine a student's knowledge, skills, or misconceptions in order to identify specific student need
Evaluation	judgments made about the quality of overall student performance, primarily for the purpose of communicating student achievement
Exemplars	work samples that demonstrate the top level of performance
Formative	assessment designed to provide direction for improvement and/or adjustment to a program, individual students, or an entire class

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GLE (Grade Level Expectation)	specific statements of what students need to know and be able to do at each grade level K-8 to achieve the grade-cluster benchmarks and ultimately the exit Florida standards
Grading	the process of determining a number or letter to be placed on report cards or reports of progress
Grading Variables	data collected documenting student achievement of content or Sunshine State Standards that are used to determine course or class grades
Large-scale	assessments administered in the same way across many classrooms
Norm Referenced	assessment/evaluation designed to reveal how an individual student's performance compares to that of other similar students nationally
Peer Assessment	a reflective practice in which students make observations about their peers' performances relative to expectations or specific criteria
Performance Assessment	assessment that relies on observation of a student's performance or the product of a performance requiring students to demonstrate directly the specific skills and knowledge being assessed
Portfolio	a purposeful, integrated collection of student work that tells the story of the student's efforts, progress, and achievement of standards in a given area
Reliability	an indication of the consistency of scores across evaluators (inter-rater reliability), over time (test-retest reliability), or across different versions of the test (inter-form reliability or internal consistency reliability)
Report Card	the formal mechanism used to communicate student achievement of standards at designated points during the year
Reporting Variables	data collected documenting student attainment of Florida Goal 3 Standards and related behaviors (effort, participation, attitude, attendance, and punctuality) that are separately reported via student report cards

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Rubric	a set of guidelines for assigning scores and providing feedback which provides descriptions for all criteria being assessed and shows a range of performance from low to exemplary
Scoring	assigning a number or letter to a particular piece of student work or performance
Selected-response	assessments in which students choose a correct response from among a set of responses offered by the developer of the assessment
Self-Assessment	a reflective practice in which students make observations about their own performance relative to criteria and standards
Standard	a description of general expectations regarding knowledge and skill development within a strand of the Sunshine State Standards
Standards-based	instruction and assessment targeted at established content standards and designed to reveal what a student knows or can do
Standardized	assessments that are administered and scored in exactly the same way for all students
Strand	a label for a category of knowledge, such as reading, writing, measurement, or economics within the Sunshine State Standards
Summative	assessment/evaluation designed to determine student achievement at the end of a unit, course, term, or year providing teachers with information for making final judgments about student achievement
Sunshine State Standards	expectations for student achievement outlined by the state of Florida that describe what students should know and be able to do in specific content areas
Validity	the extent to which assessment and evaluation procedures measure what they are intended to measure rather than extraneous features

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SUGGESTED READINGS

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RELATED WEB SITES

Assessment Training Institute (ATI) – http://www.asessmentinst.com

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development – http://www.ascd.org

BEACON Learning Center – http://www.beaconlc.org

International Center for Leadership in Education – http://www.daggett.com

Midcontinent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL) – http://www.mcrel.org

Relearning by Design – http://www.relearning.org

Southeastern Region Vision for Education (SERVE) – http://www.serve.org

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ORGANIZATIONS

Assessment Training Institute (ATI)
50 SW Second Avenue, Suite 300 ● Portland, Oregon 97204

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
P.O. Box 79734 ● Baltimore, Maryland 21279

International Center for Leadership in Education, Inc.
1587 Route 146 ● Rexford, New York 12148

Maryland Assessment Consortium
3471 Campus Drive ●Ijamsville, Maryland 21754

Relearning by Design, Inc.
65 South Main Street Building B, Box 2-10● Pennington, NJ. 08534

SouthEastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE)
P.O. Box 5367 ● Greensboro, North Carolina 27435

FIRST GRADE ACHIEVEMENT REPORT

BAY DISTRICT SCHOOLS ~ PANAMA CITY, FL

SCHOOL YEAR: 20___ - 20___

Student Name:	
School:	
Teacher:	
Principal:	

Attendance	1	2	3	4	Year
Days Present					
Days Absent					
Days Tardy					
Attendance Grade					

K-2 Academic Achievement Key

The Florida Sunshine State Standards describe what students should know and be able to do. The symbols below describe current achievement levels of the Florida Sunshine State Standards.

E – Exceeds: ~achievement is above the grade level expectation
~knowledge/skills demonstrated in creative & complex ways

S – Satisfactory: ~achievement is at the grade level expectation
~knowledge/skills demonstrated with considerable competence

N – Needs Improvement: ~achievement is approaching the grade level expectation
~knowledge/skills are demonstrated with some competence

U – Unsatisfactory: ~achievement is well below the grade level expectation
~knowledge/skills are demonstrated with limited competence

I – Incomplete: ~insufficient information available at this time

-- Not assessed this nine weeks

K-2 Report Card Progress Code

BS – student is making adequate progress but is **below grade level**
(for IEP, AIP, REACH, and LEP students only)

Nonacademic Scoring Key

S – Satisfactory: ~student performance is acceptable

N – Needs Improvement: ~student performance needs to improve
(for scoring attendance, work/study habits, and conduct/behavior)

Work / Study Habits	1	2	3	4
Listens carefully				
Follows directions				
Is prepared with materials / homework				
Works cooperatively				
Uses time wisely to complete activities				
Uses materials / equipment properly				
Puts forth best effort				
Uses legible writing				
Conduct / Behavior				
Obeys classroom and school rules				
Demonstrates self control (verbal, physical)				
Respects adults / peers				
Demonstrates social skills				

Language Arts	1	2	3	4
Reading Process (phonics, vocabulary)				
~Constructs Meaning / Comprehension				
Writing Process / Composition (drafts, edits, revises, publishes, spelling, grammar)				
~Communicates Effectively				
Listening, Viewing, Speaking (listens for information, nonverbal cues, speaks effectively)				
Language (recognizes language patterns, sounds, rhythms, repetition, rhyme)				
Literature (recognizes story elements, literary forms)				

Mathematics	1	2	3	4
Number Sense, Concepts, & Operations (number names, sizes, counting, grouping, place value, addition, subtraction, estimation, odd/even, fractions)				
Measurement (length, weight, time, temperature, capacity, metric & nonstandard units, comparison, estimation, problem solving)				
Geometry & Spatial Sense (2 & 3 dimensional shapes, symmetry, reflections, classification, comparison, number line)				
Algebraic Thinking (patterns, relations, functions, equations, graphs, formulas)				
Data Analysis & Probability (graphs, charts, range, median, mode, predicting, probability, problem solving)				

	1	2	3	4
Health				
Science				
Social Studies				
Art (academic performance)				
~Conduct / Behavior				
Music (academic performance)				
~Conduct / Behavior				
Physical Education (academic performance)				
~Conduct / Behavior				

Teacher Comments

Reporting Period 1

Working below grade level:
Reading ☐
Writing ☐
Math ☐

☐ Conference Requested

Reporting Period 2

Working below grade level:
Reading ☐
Writing ☐
Math ☐

☐ Conference Requested

Reporting Period 3

Working below grade level:
Reading ☐
Writing ☐
Math ☐

☐ Conference Requested

Reporting Period 4

Working below grade level:
Reading ☐
Writing ☐
Math ☐

☐ Conference Requested

End-of-Year Status

Acceptable Attendance: Yes__ No__ Acceptable Behavior: Yes__ No__
Student on Grade Level: Yes__ No__ Student: Promoted to___ Retained in ___

DETACH AND RETURN TO SCHOOL WITH STUDENT THE FOLLOWING SCHOOL DAY

Student Name: _____
Student Signature: _____
Parent Signature: _____

Parent Comments:

☐ **Conference Requested** **Phone Number:** _____

CIS.0601.026

Distribution: White- First Reporting Period Canary-Second Reporting Period Pink-Third Reporting Period Blue-Fourth Reporting Period Manila-School Records

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BAY DISTRICT SCHOOLS
CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES
GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS ACHIEVEMENT CHECKLIST - FIRST GRADE

SCHOOL YEAR: 20___ - 20___

STUDENT _____ SCHOOL _____ TEACHER _____ PRINCIPAL _____

1	2	3	4	Standard #	Grade Level Expectations
				READING	
				LA.A.1.1.1.1.1	Uses information to make predictions
				LA.A.1.1.2.1.1	Uses phonics
				LA.A.1.1.2.1.2	Uses sound/symbol for decoding
				LA.A.1.1.2.1.3	Uses beginning letters and patterns for decoding
				LA.A.1.1.2.1.4	Uses sentence structure to decode words
				LA.A.1.1.2.1.5	Uses context clues to develop meaning
				LA.A.1.1.2.1.6	Uses word attack strategies
				LA.A.1.1.3.1.1	Identifies/classifies words into categories
				LA.A.1.1.3.1.2	Uses knowledge of words to predict meaning of compound words
				LA.A.1.1.3.1.3	Uses resources and references to understand word meanings
				LA.A.1.1.3.1.4	Uses suffixes to understand words
				LA.A.1.1.3.1.5	Develops vocabulary from selections read aloud
				LA.A.1.1.4.1.1	Uses strategies to comprehend text
				LA.A.2.1.1.1.1	Knows main idea and details of a story
				LA.A.2.1.1.1.2	Uses details and information to answer questions
				LA.A.2.1.1.1.3	Uses text and knowledge for reasoning
				LA.A.2.1.1.1.4	Tells likenesses and differences between stories
				LA.A.2.1.2.1.1	Chooses material to read for pleasure
				LA.A.2.1.2.1.2	Reads aloud familiar material
				LA.A.2.1.3.1.1	Reads for information
				LA.A.2.1.4.1.1	Can identify fact or fiction
				LA.A.2.1.5.1.1	Uses simple reference material
				LA.A.2.1.5.1.2	Uses first letter to alphabetize
				LA.A.2.1.5.1.3	Uses alphabetical order to find information
				WRITING	
				LA.B.1.1.1.1.1	Brainstorms ideas before writing
				LA.B.1.1.1.1.2	Plans before writing first draft
				LA.B.1.1.1.1.3 LA.B.1.1.2.1.3	Focuses and maintains a single idea
				LA.B.1.1.2.1.1	Writes legibly
				LA.B.1.1.2.1.2	Identifies letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs
				LA.B.1.1.2.1.4	Uses adjectives to express ideas
				LA.B.1.1.2.1.5	Organizes writing correctly
				LA.B.1.1.2.1.6	Uses strategies for writing
				LA.B.1.1.2.1.7	Evaluates writing
				LA.B.1.1.2.1.8	Revises writing
				LA.B.1.1.3.1.1	Uses phonemic and conventional spelling
				LA.B.1.1.3.1.2	Spells commonly used first grade words
				LA.B.1.1.3.1.3	Uses punctuation and capitalization
				LA.B.1.1.3.1.4	Uses complete sentences
				LA.B.2.1.1.1.1	Writes stories using different topics
				LA.B.2.1.1.1.2	Participates during group writing activity
				LA.B.2.1.1.1.3	Writes questions or notes using different topics
				LA.B.2.1.2.1.1	Writes informal texts
				LA.B.2.1.2.1.2	Writes for a purpose
				LA.B.2.1.3.1.1	Uses basic word processing skills and software
				LA.B.2.1.4.1.1	Writes simple informational texts

1	2	3	4	Standard #	Grade Level Expectations
				MATHEMATICS	
				Number Sense, Concepts, and Operations	
				MA.A.1.1.1.1.1	Counts objects to 100 or more
				MA.A.1.1.1.1.2	Reads and writes numerals to 100 or more
				MA.A.1.1.2.1.1	Compares and orders numbers to 100 or more
				MA.A.1.1.3.1.1	Shows real-world use of numbers to 100 or more
				MA.A.1.1.1.1.3	Uses ordinal numbers 1st-10th or more
				MA.A1.1.3.1.2	Uses and explains fractions
				MA.A1.1.3.1.3	Compares fractions in real-life situations
				MA.A1.1.3.1.4	Knows fractional parts make a whole
				MA.A.1.1.4.1.1	Understands equivalent forms of the same number
				MA.A.2.1.1.1.1	Counts by 2s, 5s, and 10s to 100 or more
				MA.A.2.1.1.1.2	Uses material to show place value to 100 or more
				MA.A.2.1.1.1.3	Counts backward and forward by one, beginning with any number less than 100
				MA.A.2.1.1.1.4	Counts forward by tens from any number less than ten
				MA.A.2.1.2.1.1	Counts and groups objects into tens and ones
				MA.A.2.1.2.1.3	Knows place value patterns
				MA.A2.1.2.1.3	Knows place value of numbers to 100
				MA.A.3.1.1.1.1	Demonstrates understanding of addition and subtraction
				MA.A.3.1.1.1.2	Solves basic addition facts
				MA.A.3.1.1.1.3	Describes related facts for a fact family
				MA.A.3.1.1.1.4	Knows strategies of addition to solve problems
				MA.A.3.1.1.1.5	Adds and subtracts two-digit numbers without regrouping
				MA.A.3.1.2.1.1	Chooses the proper operation to solve number problems
				MA.A.3.1.2.1.2	Uses objects to solve number problems
				MA.A.3.1.2.1.3	Describes how to solve number problems
				MA.A.3.1.2.1.4	Writes number sentences (+/-)
				MA.A.3.1.3.1.1	Knows how to solve real-world problems (+/-)
				MA.A.3.1.3.1.2	Uses calculator to (+/-) and skip count
				MA.A.4.1.1.1.1	Understands the language of estimation and approximation to describe numbers
				MA.A.4.1.1.1.2 -4	Estimates, explains, and checks the number of objects by counting, comparing, and using basic facts
				MA.A.5.1.1.1.1	Demonstrates differences between odd and even numbers
				Measurement	
				MA.B.1.1.1.1.1-3	Knows and demonstrates measurement concepts of length and weight
				MA.B.1.1.1.1.4	Understands time using digital and analog clocks
				MA.B.1.1.1.1.5	Understands temperature using a thermometer
				MA.B.1.1.1.1.6	Demonstrates understanding of capacity
				MA.B.1.1.2.1.1 MA.B.2.1.1.1.1-2 MA.B.4.1.1.1.1	Uses standard and nonstandard measurement to compare and order objects
				MA.B.2.1.1.1.3 MA.B.2.1.2.1.1 MA.B.3.1.1.1.1 MA.B.4.1.2.1.1	Uses customary, metric, and uniform units to measure, compare, and order objects using standard tools
				MA.B.3.1.1.1.2 MA.B.4.1.2.1.2	Estimates and measures the passage of time and uses appropriate tools
				MA.B.3.1.1.1.3	Knows and compares money

1	2	3	4	Standard #	Grade Level Expectations
				MATHEMATICS	
				Geometry and Spatial Sense	
				MA.C.1.1.1.1.1- 3	Knows and sorts two and three-dimensional shapes and figures according to their attributes
				MA.C.2.1.1.1.1	Understands symmetry
				MA.C.2.1.1.1.2	Combines shapes to form other shapes
				MA.C.2.1.1.1.3	Constructs the reflection of a shape
				MA.C.2.1.1.1.4	Follows directions using positional language
				MA.C.2.1.2.1.1	Demonstrates slides and turns using concrete materials
				MA.C.3.1.1.1.1	Compares and sorts real-life objects
				MA.C.3.1.1.1.2	Knows real-life geometric shapes
				MA.C.3.1.1.1.3	Compares, describes, and sorts objects according to attributes
				MA.C.3.1.2.1.1	Locates and explains numbers using a number line
				Algebraic Thinking	
				MA.D.1.1.1.1.1 MA.D.1.1.1.1.2	Identifies, describes, and compares patterns and pattern rules
				MA.D.1.1.1.1.3 MA.D1.1.2.1.4	Explores number patterns on a hundred chart and a calculator
				MA.D.1.1.1.1.4 MA.D.1.1.2.1.1 MA.D.1.1.2.1.2-3	Predicts, extends, creates, and transfers patterns
				MA.D.2.1.1.1.1-2 MA.D.2.1.2.1.1	Solves addition and subtraction sentences with an unknown number, using symbols, geometric shapes, or concrete objects
				Data Analysis and Probability	
				MA.E.1.1.1.1.1	Surveys to answer a question involving two choices
				MA.E.1.1.1.1.2	Records data using materials or pictures
				MA.E.1.1.1.1.3 -4 MA.E.1.1.2.1.1	Organizes, creates, and reads a simple graph
				MA.E.1.1.3.1.1	Makes a reasonable prediction using data
				MA.E.1.1.3.1.2	Uses a calculator to compare data
				MA.E.1.1.3.1.3	Explores computer graphing software
				MA.E.2.1.2.1.1	Predicts if a given event will occur
				MA.E.3.1.2.1.1-2	Creates a two category survey and displays and interprets information

☐ Not Introduced

☑ Introduced/Not Assessed

☒ Assessed/Not Mastered

☒ Mastered

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ALIGN KEY INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS (STANDARDS) WITH CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT?

SERVE has worked with numerous teachers on classroom assessment over the past ten years. Through this work the following has evolved in terms of what it means to align goals to classroom assessment but first, a definition of what we mean by assessment.

> *"Broadly defined, classroom assessment is an ongoing process through which teachers and students interact to promote greater learning. The assessment process involves using a range of strategies to make decisions regarding instruction and gathering information about student performance or behavior in order to diagnose students' problems, monitor their progress, and give feedback for improvement. The classroom assessment process also involves using multiple methods of obtaining student information through a variety of assessment strategies such as written tests, interviews, observations, and performance tasks"* (McMunn 2000, page 6).

Formative assessment like most classroom assessment, is an on going, recursive cycle that should include student involvement in the following cycle:

- Learning targets are defined clearly, and students understand them.
- Evidence of student learning is gathered in multiple and diverse ways over time.
- Inferences and interpretations are made based on the evidence.
- Instructional plans are made based on those inferences and interpretations.

Figure 1 below illustrate key assessment stages a teacher should think about and use to ensure that assessments are aligned with instructional goals or standards. This assessment cycle outlines a framework for teachers to use when planning instruction to align it with the appropriate assessment in the classroom beginning with the first stage, Clarifying Learning Targets.

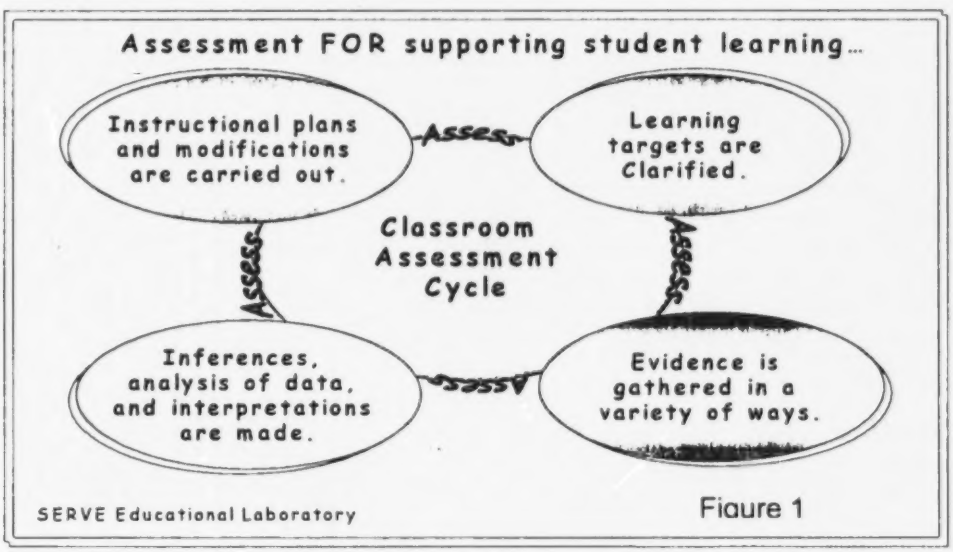

Figure 1

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CLARIFYING THE LEARNING TARGETS

Many teachers have not had opportunities to talk together about what effective learners do. They lack extensive formal training in specific content, and, they may not understand how the concepts or standards for learning come together in a complex way. To complete an assessment cycle, teachers first must be clear about what effective learners need to do in specific content or for learning specific skills. This is defining clearly the learning targets the students need to achieve. For example, in reading, effective readers demonstrate oral fluency, comprehend the meaning of what they have read, use appropriate reading strategies, demonstrate higher-order thinking about what they are reading, and are motivated to read. Teachers must first understand and clarify these targets, and then plan assessments to provide evidence of their mastery.

GATHERING EVIDENCE IN A VARIETY OF WAYS

Teachers should gather evidence about student performance or progress on the established targets in a variety of ways. For example, state test results, individual reading conferences, written retell, and literature circle dialogues are all types of evidence for reading and each of these sources measures different reading targets in different ways. Multiple assessment methods give a more complete and accurate view of each student and where that student is in achieving stated targets. Anne Davies suggests considering triangulation of evidence (see Figure 2) for students so there are at least three pieces of evidence considered. The evidence must be 'good' or what many people refer to as 'quality' evidence from quality work/assessments students are given to do. It may be helpful to think about assessment methods as falling into categories:

1. Paper and pencil tests or assignments
2. Oral questioning individually or in a group
3. Observation
4. Performances
5. Products or projects

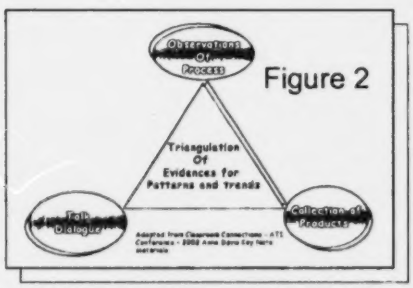

Figure 2

MAKING INFERENCES AND ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATIONS

Once data have been collected, teachers then use evidence gathered to draw conclusions and make decisions about student learning. The quality of the conclusions is based on the quality of the evidence. Good conclusions cannot be made unless there is an understanding of the learning targets and there is enough evidence to make good decisions. In this stage, the teacher determines what the student is struggling with and then thinks about the best way to help this student. This is a crucial stage for improving student learning. If the assessment process stops here, and students merely get labeled, the learning stops. If the assessment process stops here, critical assessment evidence will not be utilized to adjust and improve instructional practices.

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MODIFYING INSTRUCTIONAL PLANS

Finally, to improve student performance, the assessment cycle must be completed by implementing changes in instruction for the student based on the conclusions from the evidence. Often teachers may have the evidence to identify weaknesses in students but never follow through by providing the instructional support the student needs to improve. In these cases, the assessment evidence is merely recorded in a traditional grade book. It is not analyzed to determine student needs or modify instructional plans accordingly. This 'traditional' way of thinking keeps instruction and assessment as separate processes. For example, if a teacher found that a student has poor oral fluency skills, then talking about this with the student and setting some goals to work on to help improve on oral fluency is key to the student improving on this learning target. When used appropriately, instructional procedures and assessment practices work in tandem with teachers making continuous instructional adaptations based on quality assessment evidence.

By definition, assessment means, "to sit by," suggesting a relationship between learner and teacher that is one of feedback for improvement and a continuous process for learning. Richard Stiggins provides a view of assessment that is important to consider when thinking about the development of effective schools. Stiggins (1999) has been perhaps the most ardent advocate of the need for "assessment literacy". Stiggins (June 2002) clarifies the distinction between assessment OF learning and assessment FOR learning. Assessment OF learning is assessment that is reported to provide evidence to stakeholders of achievement. This type of assessment is more summative. Whereas, assessment FOR learning is directly related to helping students learn – learn prior to when the assessments OF learning are given. He further states that assessment FOR learning should not be equated simply with 'formative' assessment (A continuous monitoring of student learning with the purpose of providing feedback to the learner as to progress and achievement, and thereby supporting and informing the teacher as to the next teaching steps). Stiggins states that if done correctly, assessment FOR learning is greater than 'formative' assessment because it involves students in the process. The data on teacher growth in formative assessment presented in this paper is supportive of Stiggins's definition of 'assessment FOR learning' though we refer to it as formative and we do consider the student as an integral part of the classroom process.

In a research summary by Black and Wiliam, Inside the Black Box - *Raising Standards through Classroom Assessment (1998)*, they state, "effective programs of formative assessment involve far more than the addition of a few observations and tests to existing programs. They require careful scrutiny of all the main components of a teaching plan. Indeed, it is clear that instruction and formative assessment are indivisible." Thus, again, when we refer to teacher growth in the area of formative assessment we mean more than just tools used to measure growth. We mean, and this list is not conclusive, continuous, knowledge and understanding of the learning goals/targets, feedback driven, pushing for student learning, student involvement, showing students how to improve vs. just giving a grade, and ample opportunities to learn. Separating formative assessment from instruction has no clearly defined lines so determining when instruction stops and assessment begins is really not a factor in a strong learning environment. Many teachers do not see the mesh of the two domains and continue to plan, for instruction and assessment as separate things and thus the whole process is not meaningful for students.

WHAT IS 'QUALITY' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

From the three questions addressed above, it should be clear that educators have a lot of work to do in order to build teacher capacity to report student achievement to standards. Just like with student learning, districts/schools have the responsibility to provide the training and support necessary to promote changes in classroom assessments, grading and reporting practices that is meaningful for teachers. So, what is "quality" professional development?

"There has been a strong tendency in recent federal and state policy initiatives to by-pass or ignore districts' role in the change process.... In many ways, districts are the major source of capacity-building for schools, structuring, providing or controlling access to professional development, curriculum, and new instructional ideas, more and qualified staff, relationships with external agents, and so on." (pg. 17, Goertz and Massell, 1999)

Richard Elmore (2002) suggest that professional development requires commitment to consistency and focus over a long term where the training can shape learning, that it should be designed to develop capacity of teachers to work collectively, that it should embody a clear model of adult learning, that is it best on-site, that it is best if focused on student learning, that it is based on research and exemplary practice, that is embedded in classroom learning and curriculum, that it involves school leaders and staff, and that it has a way to be monitored and a method to provide feedback on the practice. The National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching in 1999 outlined the suggestions for Researched Based Principles for Improving Professional Development

A district may refer to the National Standards for Staff Development developed by the National Staff Development Council in 2001 that include context, process, and content standards. These standards lay a good groundwork for producing quality professional development for teachers. However, transforming these standards into quality professional development within a district can be hard, especially when old paradigms of what constitutes professional development exists.

> "Every school can point to its energetic, engaged, and effective teachers... We regularly honor and deify these pedagogical geniuses. But these exceptions are the rule. For the most part, we regard inspired and demanding teaching as an individual trait of teachers, much like hair color or shoe size, rather than as a professional norm, or an expectation that might apply to any teacher" (p. 299, Elmore, 1996)

To add to the problem for districts, "studies show that teachers think they are providing challenging learning opportunities to students to a greater extent than they actually are. One study of biology teachers' assessment practices showed that although teachers reported broad thinking and problem-solving goals for their students, their assessment practices in reality focused on recognition and recall kinds of skills (Bol & Strage, 1996). Even in college classrooms, those who have studied assessment practices have found that teachers tend to think they are teaching to higher-order thinking goals, when student assignments are examined, higher order thinking goals tend to be weakly represented (Angelo & Cross, 1993). Similarly, Spillane and Zeuli, in a study of 24 mathematics teachers who said they were implementing mathematics reform as outlined by the NCTM standards, found that only 4 of those teachers were giving

students work that reflected the broader problem-solving and reasoning goals one would expect to see."

Equalizing the quality of learning opportunities does not come about by simply putting out some literature for teachers or conducting a workshop. Surprisingly, it may not come about by adopting a particular innovative curriculum, either, in that good instructional materials can be poorly used. In one study of a turnaround of a low performing high poverty urban school, it was reported that the school adopted the rigorous curriculum of a well-regarded local, elite private school but they phased it in grade level by grade level with feedback from a staff person assigned to directly work with teachers on their implementation. In other words, evidence suggests that the hard work of improving the quality of learning experiences provided students has to happen teacher by teacher in a professional work environment where hard questions about practice are discussed and individualized feedback to teachers is common practice.

> *"Professional development for teachers should be school-based, preferably embedded in instructional efforts through collaborative analysis of student work. This is contrary to most traditional professional development, such as courses leading to certificates or degrees but unrelated to the specific needs of the school, quick-fix workshops that do not offer consistent feedback, or professional development offered by external trainers to help teachers adopt specific programs. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future recommends that teachers 'develop professional discourse around problems of practice' as a central component of professional development. What is needed, the Commission says, is replacing the isolation of teaching with 'forums in which teaching and learning can be discussed and analyzed, and where serious examination of practice, its outcomes, and its alternatives is possible'."* (p. 22. *Add It Up, Using Research to Improve Education for Low Income and Minority Students*, Anne Lewis, 2001, Poverty and Race Research Council

Corcoran (1995) states that most districts think of "professional development almost exclusively in terms of formal education activities, such as courses or workshop." These are still one-shot sessions with speakers or consultants and there is typically little or no follow-up. This leads many teachers to view professional development as a waste of time. For professional development to be effective and focused, educators at the district and school level need to be clear about the problems they are addressing and determine the best conditions for teachers to gain experience, build capacity, implement strategies, and reflect on the learning in order to change practice. Then professional development moves from one of a traditional approach to that of a reflective learner approach as outlined in Figure 3.

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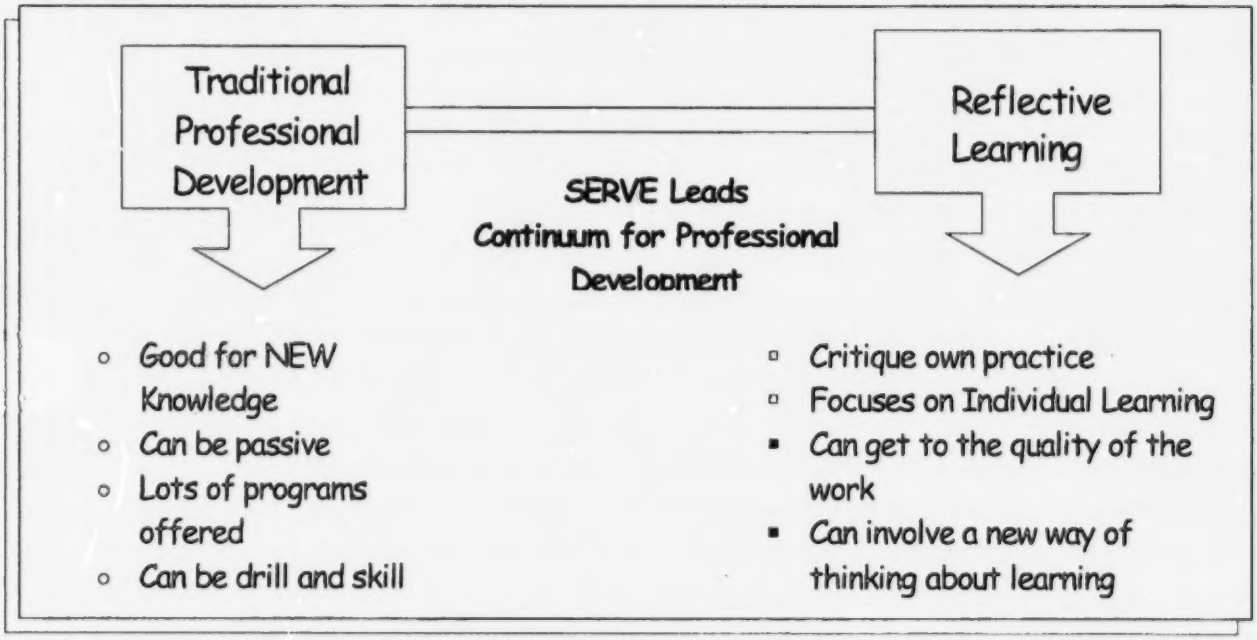
Creating a professional culture where teachers are viewed as reflective learners is difficult for many districts and schools. Approaches to teacher professional development and the development of a competent program are numerous, for example, joint work, collaboration with state, local education agencies, or colleges, using teacher mentors or networks, professional development schools, National Board training, and Teachers as Researchers are all excellent models. However, if a district or school is really thinking about the impact of teacher learning on student achievement then a more systemic approach to professional development may offer a better way to foster the growth of a different learning culture and build capacity within the system.

FIGURE 3


Traditional Professional Development
Reflective Learning
SERVE Leads Continuum for Professional Development
Good for NEW Knowledge
Can be passive
Lots of programs offered
Can be drill and skill
Critique own practice
Focuses on Individual Learning
Can get to the quality of the work
Can involve a new way of thinking about learning

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TIMELINE FOR BAY DISTRICT'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK

DATE	WORK SCOPE
November 2, 1998	• Met with District Administrators to discuss the support and focus of Phase I Assessment Research Project (Building Teacher Classroom Assessment Capacity)
November 3, 1998	• District Assessment Committee met to discuss participation in Phase II (Grading and Reporting Phase) of the Assessment Research Project with SERVE staff
December 7, 1998	• District Visioning session
December 8, 1998	• District liaison and SERVE staff met with R&D teams from four schools to discuss project scope and perspectives on participation
January 7-11, 1999	• *AD Hoc committee developed (with SERVE staff, district staff, and outside consultants) and create the first rough draft of a district assessment guidelines document
February 11, 1999	• After district administrator's approval of the draft of Classroom Assessment Guidelines document revisions were made and an orientation to the District Research design for Phase II project was given to the District Curriculum Team along with a copy of the District Classroom Assessment Guidelines for their review, edits, and approval
April 17-21, 1999	• *AD Hoc Committee meeting to discuss project, examine research, discuss district issues, and develop a professional development training Toolkit for the trainers and teachers for classroom assessment (formative use), grading practices, and reporting procedures.
April 29, 1999	• Meeting with four additional schools to give an orientation of Phase II research project to gain support and participation of these initial schools
May 14-17, 1999	• Ad Hoc Committee meeting to finalize training agenda and materials for Toolkit and discuss training format
July 12-16, 1999	• First group of teachers in their R&D School teams were delivered professional development, Examining Grading and Reporting Practices with assignments (see explanation below)
August, 1999	• Field-testing of Classroom Assessment Guidelines begins with R&D school teams.
August 1999 –May 2000	• R&D teachers collect research evidence of classroom implementation of assessment guidelines including documentation of specific changes in classroom practice.

October, 1999	• District and SERVE team visit R&D schools and classrooms to collect additional research data and provide support for classroom implementation.
April, 2000	• R&D follow-up meeting held to collect year 1 field-test data. Specific feedback collected from teachers regarding CAG, professional development, and district reporting formats.
April – May, 2000	• Revisions made to guidelines, professional development, and district report cards based on feedback from field-test teachers.

DATE	WORK SCOPE
May, 2000	• Research documentation portfolios collected from year 1-field test teachers.
July, 2000	• Examining Grading and Reporting Practices Training provided to an expanded group of teachers within R&D schools.
August 2000 – May 2001	• Expanded R&D teachers collect research evidence of classroom implementation of assessment guidelines including documentation of specific changes in classroom practice.
October, 2000	• District and SERVE team visit R&D schools and classrooms to collect additional research data and provide support for classroom implementation.
April, 2001	• R&D follow-up meeting held to collect year 2 field-test data. Specific feedback collected from teachers regarding CAG, professional development, and district reporting formats.
April – May, 2001	• Revisions made to guidelines, professional development, and district report cards based on feedback from field-test teachers.
May, 2001	• Research documentation portfolios collected from year 2 field test teachers.
July, 2001	• Examining Grading and Reporting Practices Training provided to an expanded group of teachers within R&D schools.

*Ad Hoc Committee – Committee of district staff, external consultants, and teachers who worked on the Classroom Assessment Guidelines Document and developed the Professional Development Toolkit, "*Examining Grading and Reporting.*"

Examining Grading & Reporting Practices

wo – Day Training Agenda

Time	ACTIVITY	NOTES	MATERIALS
Day 1 – 8:00 – 3:30			

15 mins.
15 mins.
15 mins.
 	
30 mins.
	Overview – (1hr. 15 mins.) ***(Patricia & Nancy***
	Welcome – (Beth)
	Ice Breaker – (Patricia)
	Needs of District (Patricia)
	• **Research Project PPT (Patricia)**
	• **Training Agendas (Patricia)**
	• **Workshop Reflections (Patricia)**
	• **Research Expectations (Nancy)**
	• **Introduce the "Concern Bin" and Share "Whining Rubric"**
	• **Evaluation Surveys**
	  • What Does Standards-Based Mean
	  • Classroom Grading Practices Survey
		• Self-selected groups
		• Ice-Breaker page should be available for participants to complete as they arrive
		• **Patricia does all of overview for Session II**
			• Overhead Projector
			• Overlays
			• Facilitator Notes
			• Participant Notebooks
			• Chart Paper for Concern Bin
			• Post-it Notes

15 mins.	***Break 9:15 – 9:30***		
5 min. 50 mins. 50 mins. 10 mins. 5 mins.	***Setting the Stage – (2 hrs.)*** ***(Lee Ann & Ken)*** • **Setting the Stage Purposes (Lee Ann)** • **Testing Issues/ Mrs. Bonkers (Lee Ann)** • **Purposes for Grading - Alfie Kohn (Ken)** • **Introduction to Guidelines (Lee Ann)** • **Setting the Stage Reflection (Lee Ann)**	• Self-selected groups • Explain presentation for Goal 6	• Overhead Projector • Overlays • Facilitator Notes • Participant Notebooks • Chart Paper for Concern Bin • Post-it Notes • Dr. Seuss Book
1 hr.	**Lunch (11:30 – 12:30)**	• Display Goal 6 – School-Based Administrators • **Ken – Session II**	
5 mins. 30 mins. 5 mins.	**Goal 1 – (40 mins.) (Nancy)** • **Goal 1 Purposes (Nancy)** • **Purpose of Assessment (Nancy)** • **Goal 1 Reflection (Nancy)**		• Overhead Projector • Overlays • Facilitator Notes • Participant Notebooks • Chart Paper for Concern Bin • Post-it Notes • Sentence Strips • Principle Posters for Wall

Time	ACTIVITY	NOTES	MATERIALS
5 mins. 50 mins. 5 mins.	**Goal 2 - (60 min.) (Ken)** • **Goal 2 Purposes/Principles/Guidelines (Ken)** • **Grading the Oral Presentation (Ken)** • **Goal 2 Reflections (Ken)**	• Group teachers by instructional levels (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12)	• Overhead Projector • Overlays • Facilitator Notes • Participant Notebooks • Chart Paper for Concern Bin • Post-it Notes • Videotape • TV/VCR
15 min.	**Break (2:10 – 2:25)**	• Display Goal 6 – District Staff	
5 mins. 55 mins. 5 mins.	***Goal 3 – (1 hr. 5mins.) (Patricia & Lee Ann)*** • **Goal 3 Purposes/Principles/Guidelines (Patricia)** • **Formative Assessment (Patricia)** • **Grading Story Assignment (Patricia)**	• Participants work in groups to read articles and report	• Overhead Projector • Overlays • Facilitator Notes • Participant Notebooks • Chart Paper • Post-it Notes • Markers
Day 2 (8:00--3:30)			
40 mins. 5 mins.	**Goal 3 Continued – (45 mins.) (Lee Ann)** • **5 Keys to Quality Assessment (Lee Ann)** • **Goal 3 Reflections (Lee Ann)**	• Self-selected groups	• Overhead Projector • Overlays • Facilitator Notes • Participant Notebooks • Chart Paper • Post-it Notes
5 mins. 15 mins. 40 mins.	***Goal 4 – (1 hr.) (Ken)*** • **Goal 4 Purposes/Principles/Guidelines (Ken)** • **Grading Story Assignment (Ken)** • Ms. Watt's English Class (Ken)	• Self-selected groups	• Overhead Projector • Overlays • Facilitator Notes • Participant Notebooks • Chart Paper • Post-it Notes
15 mins.	**Break (9:45-10:00)**	• Display Goal 6 – Students	
30 mins. 30 mins. 15 mins. 10 mins. 5 mins.	**Goal 4 Continued – (1 hr. 30 mins.) (Ken)** • **Grading Story Cards (Ken)** • **Grading Guidelines (Ken)** • **Bay District Guidelines (Ken)** • **The Traffic Light (Ken)** • **Goal 4 Reflections (Ken)**	• Self-selected groups	• Overhead Projector • Overlays • Facilitator Notes • Participant Notebooks • Chart Paper • Post-it Notes • Grading Story Cards
1 hr.	**Lunch (11:30–12:30)**	• Display Goal 6 – School-Board Members	

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Time	ACTIVITY	NOTES	Materials
5 mins. 50 mins. 5 mins.	**Goal 5 – (1 hour) (Nancy)** • **Goal 5 Purposes/Principles/Guidelines (Nancy)** • **Standards-Based Reporting (Nancy)** • **Goal 5 Reflections (Nancy)**	• Self-selected groups • **Patricia – Session II**	• Overhead Projector • Overlays • Facilitator Notes • Participant Notebooks • Chart Paper • Post-it Notes
15 min.	**BREAK (1:30-1:45)**	• Display Goal 6 – School Advisory Council	
5 mins. 5 mins. 5 mins.	**Goal 6 – (15 mins.) (Nancy)** • **Goal 6 Purposes/Principles (Nancy)** • **Goal 6 Guideline Review/Concern Bin** • **Goal 6 Reflections**	• Review roles and responsibilities only • **Lee Ann – Session II**	• Overhead Projector • Overlays • Facilitator Notes • Participant Notebooks • Chart Paper • Post-it Notes
5 mins. 15 mins. 10 mins. 20 mins. 20 mins. 20 mins.	**Summary and Evaluation (1 hr. 30 minutes)** **(Nancy, Lee Ann, Patricia)** • **Summary/Evaluation Purposes (Nancy)** • **R&D Project Expectations (Nancy)** • **Team Research Folders (Patricia)** • **Personal Stories (Lee Ann & 1st year teachers)** • **Question and Answer Session/Concern Bin (Nancy)** • **Training Evaluation (Wendy)**	• Self-selected Groups • Option – if participants are not involved in the research study, the last I ½ hrs. should be used as planning time for classroom implementation • **Patricia – Session II**	• Overhead Projector • Overlays • Facilitator Notes • Participant Notebooks • Chart Paper • Post-it Notes • Team Research Portfolios • Evaluation Documents

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Day 1 Agenda

INTRODUCTIONS AND OVERVIEW OF TRAINING	8:00-9:15 (Break 9:15-9:30)
SETTING THE STAGE	9:30-11:30 (Lunch 11:30-12:30)
PRINCIPLE 1 OVERVIEW	12:30-1:10
PRINCIPLE 2 OVERVIEW	1:10-2:10 (Break 2:10-2:25)
PRINCIPLE 3 OVERVIEW	2:25-3:30

Day 2 Agenda

PRINCIPLE 3 OVERVIEW Continued	8:00-8:45
PRINCIPLE 4 OVERVIEW	8:45-11:30 (Break 9:45-10:00) (Lunch 11:30-12:30)
PRINCIPLE 5 OVERVIEW	12:30-1:30 (Break 1:30-1:45)
PRINCIPLE 6 OVERVIEW	1:45-2:00
SUMMARY AND EVALUATION	2:00-3:30 Good-bye!

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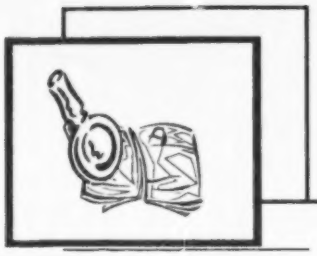
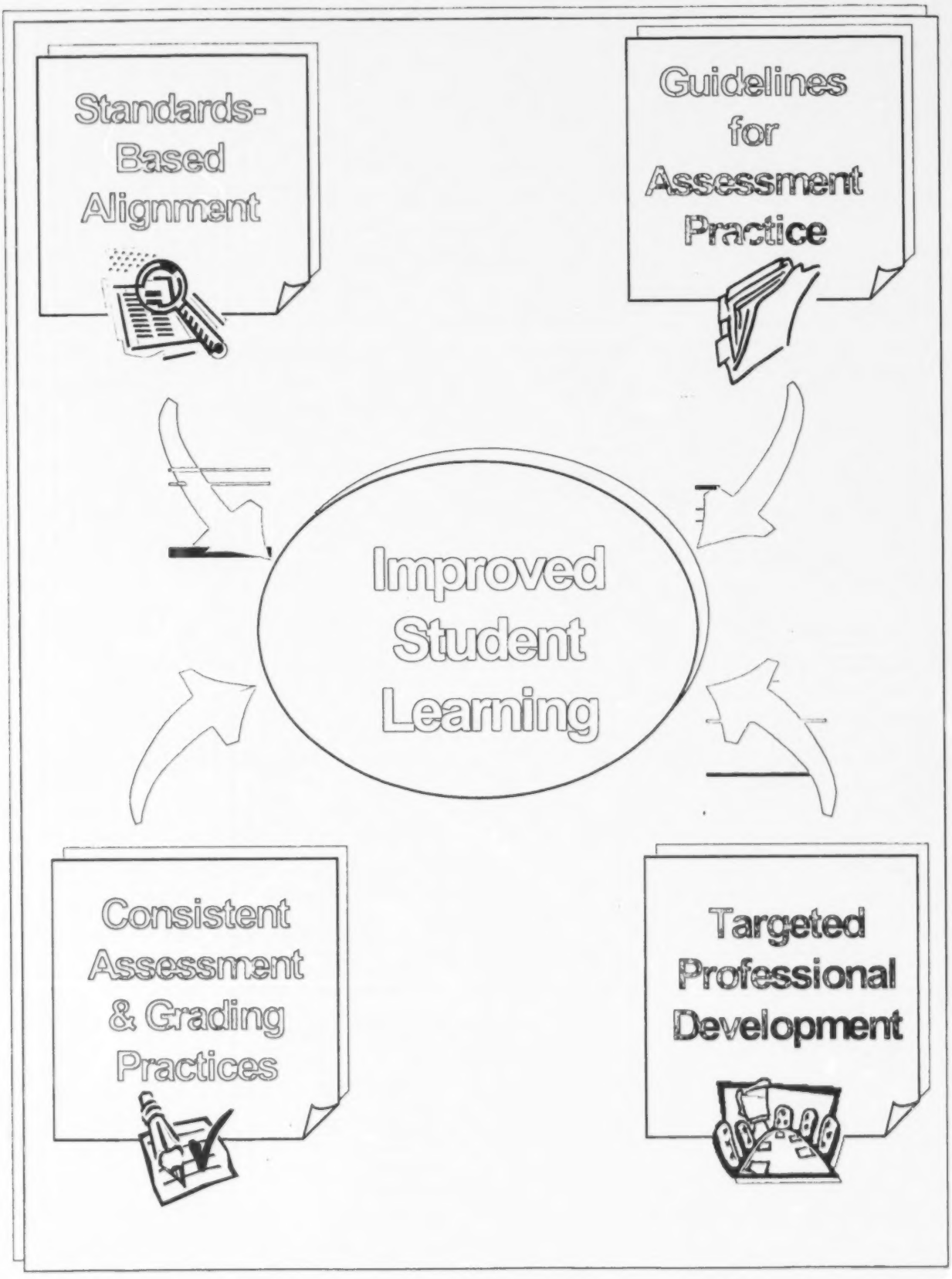


Training Purposes

- To review and understand how assessment practices can improve learning for all students
- To understand how established guidelines can help ensure more consistent classroom assessment practices among educators
- To ensure that classroom assessments are aligned with standards
- To understand and examine quality classroom assessment practices
- To examine classroom grading strategies that are fair, consistent, and meaningful
- To ensure that communication among stakeholders is timely, appropriate, and aligned to standards
- To ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, communicated, and understood by all stakeholders



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